

The

GRAIL



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H. C. McGinnis

THOSE Americans who seem overjoyed because the American Communist Party has announced its dissolution should take a long, thoughtful look at the political history of the Spanish Republic's early days. In the 1931 elections, held two days before the Republic was proclaimed, Spain's Communists elected 67 municipal councillors as compared with 34,368 Republicans, 4,813 Socialists and 41,224 Monarchists. In this election many Reds were admittedly members of other parties; and, while not voting the Communist ticket, were making their influence strongly felt within the organizations with which they were formally affiliated. In 1936, however, when inside work was not so necessary, the Marxists polled 1,739,000 votes against 3,193,000 non-Marxist Left-wingers and 3,783,000 Parliamentary Rightists. In this election the Reds cast more than one-third of the total vote, thus revealing a strength much of which had been previously concealed within the ranks of other parties. It is now apparent that their efforts had been devoted to making the Socialist Party as Marxist as possible, for

BETWEEN THE LINES

H. C. McGinnis

THE REDS GO UNDERGROUND

at times the immediate goals of the Socialists differed very little from those of the Communists. In fact, Vayo, the chief Communist working inside the Socialist Party, finally succeeded in having the Socialist Party agree to the merger of its youth organization, the Socialist Youths, with the Communist Youths. Actually, Spain's Civil War did not commence as an action between the Right and Left wings of the Republican government, but rather as an insurrection within the Socialist Party, in which the Communists lodged there tried to drive the Socialist Party into an open declaration of a proletarian dictatorship. The actual shooting began within the Socialist Party between the regular Socialists and that Party's Communist elements. Strangely enough, while Moscow was intensely interested in seeing Spain become Communist, it did not rejoice over this outbreak of hostilities.

Although Moscow had openly referred to Senor Large Caballere, the Spanish Red who led the fight within the Socialists' ranks, as the "Spanish Lenin," it was greatly annoyed and proclaimed him a nuisance when he took his fight into the open to dominate Spain. Moscow preferred to continue its Trojan Horse tactics which had been working so successfully. It had been very well satisfied with the 1936 elections which resulted in Communists holding the Premiership and three main Secretaryships, even though the Reds had polled less than one-third of the

votes. Moscow had hoped to take over from within existing organizations and with their support, rather than to alarm the rest of the world by commencing a Red revolution.

By doing this, Communism hoped to duplicate its policies in France and Italy. In France, prior to Blum's Popular Front government, French Reds often contented themselves by working inside the more conservative parties, frequently sniping at the administration in power from within the ranks of its strongest supporting parties. In this way French Reds often posed as staunch patriots, perhaps somewhat overzealous, instead of the revolutionaries they actually were. The eighth Communist International Congress, held in Moscow, in 1935, had adopted the sly Trojan Horse policy which had been formulated by Dimitrov. Under this policy Senor Alvarez del Vayo, Moscow's chief agent in Spain, remained a Socialist despite his many trips to Moscow for instructions and consultations, trips which had commenced even before the fall of the Monarchy. In Italy, in the last election held before Mussolini took over, the Communists won only 17 seats in the parliament out of a total of 508; yet this percentage was far from the Red strength in Italy. Much of the Socialist strength—Socialists held 121 seats in parliament—included Communists and Communist-minded people within the party. When Italy's internal disorders broke out, her real Red strength became plainly evident.

THE recently dissolved Communist Party in the United States did not disclose in its membership rolls its real strength. Numerically it was unimportant. But all this country's Reds did not carry a Red membership card. Like Spain's Vayo, they served their party's purpose far better by not being openly identified with the Party. Some time ago, the Federal Bureau of Investigation submitted to various Federal department heads the names of 1,597 Government employees whom it charged with being identified with Communist-front organizations and activities. Some of those so charged have been discharged, but the majority of them still continue in their official positions. From now on they will stand small chance of being fired because of Communistic attachments, for the Communist Party has officially ceased to exist.

Communists evidently don't think their ideologies sufficiently appealing to this country to submit them openly for public approval. They prefer to gain key positions in strategic organizations, often hiding entirely their Red affiliations. They then voice their doctrines under the guise of a new freedom or a progressive economic policy. During a comparatively recent strike which attracted world-wide attention, the writer interviewed scores of the strikers to ascertain the real causes underlying this wartime controversy. As these men discussed their economic philosophy, many of them enunciated nothing more than simon-pure Communism. In many cases it was very plain that they did not recognize it as such, for many of these talked with were faithfully practicing Catholics and were honest in their expressions that they wanted no part in Communism and its doctrines. Yet it was evident that they had been thoroughly indoctrinated without their realizing the real source of their indoctrination. Red propagandists, working secretly in various phases of the nation's labor movements, had gotten in their deadly work. The victims were active pushers of Red doctrines, having been led to believe that the ideology they openly proclaimed among themselves

and their neighbors was simply the necessary steps in a move toward economic justice. Subsequent investigations in other quarters revealed that this is not an isolated case. Red propagandists, masquerading as *liberals*, have infected with their doctrines many segments of American life.

IT is not reasonable to assume that this nation's Communists have had a change of heart and have gone out of business. They had no particular reason to be discouraged when they already numbered more members and affiliates than Communism had in Russia when they took over that nation of over 180 million people. They have simply gone underground for strategic reasons. Perhaps the Party's dissolution as an official political entity was intended to lend credence to the announced dissolution of Moscow's Comintern which worked for world revolution. Yet the Comintern, minus its previous label, seems to march on with increased vigor. Ambassador Oumansky, one of Moscow's outstanding foreign-service men, was not being demoted in Moscow's eyes when he was transferred from his highly important Washington post to the relatively unimportant one as Ambassador to Mexico. While in Washington, Oumansky had proved himself too much of a super-salesman of Moscow's wares to receive anything but a promotion. Developments subsequent to his transfer seem to prove conclusively that Mexico has been chosen as the location for Moscow's new branch office in the Western Hemisphere.

From all reports, Mexico is seething with Red intrigues. Six months ago, Mexican Communists held a session intended to be absolutely secret with Moscow agents. The excuse for this get-together was the Ninth National (Mexican) Communist Congress. However, it appears that the session was not entirely as secret as was intended, for a Mexican paper, *Excelsior*, has stated—and refuses to retract even in the face of persistent denials—that the session outlined plans for the Communization of the Western Hemisphere. From what

careful observers can gather, it appears that somehow *Excelsior* managed to secure copies of the stenographic reports of the session's proceedings. The paper, a reputable one of considerable age, refuses to budge from its contention that it knows what went on in the Congress. Be that as it may, the general picture, as now developing, seems to support its contention. Two things are evident: first, there is a very definite Red movement afoot in Mexico; and secondly, there is a kindred movement to smear everything definitely anti-Communistic.

This situation is not exclusively Mexican. Communism is actively at work in many Latin-American countries. South American countries reveal increasing Communistic activities and intrigues. The alleged finish of the Third International, Moscow's Comintern, did not spell the end of the Red revolutionary movement within countries. These revolutionary movements are gaining much support they do not deserve; for while, ostensibly, they aim at economic reforms and justice, they are basically anarchical in their conception. They are positively contrary to the natural law's concept of the State and of society. The same justice, by orderly and decent processes, can be secured through an adoption of the economic ideal set forth in the Social Encyclicals.

Communism made alarming gains during the political and economic confusion which followed World War I. Moscow, willing to bet twice on a winning horse, looks forward eagerly to the confusion which must inevitably follow World War II. Everything in the world-wide picture of today's events proves conclusively that Communism is doing everything possible to feather its nest for the days to come. The official dissolution of the Communist Party in the United States is a definite part of that program. American Reds have gone underground for a reason most dangerous to the American way of life. We must not be lulled into a sense of false security and accordingly caught asleep at the switch.

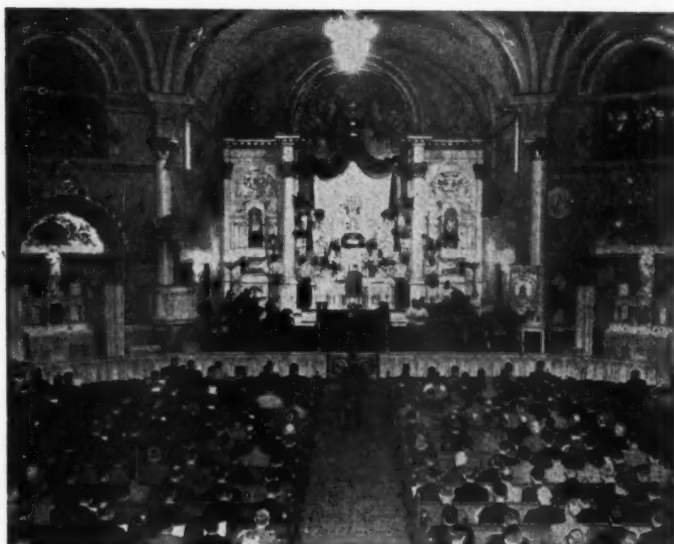
Our Manners in Church

Jerome Palmer, O.S.B.

PRAYING AND SINGING

IT WAS a Protestant boy, a lad of ten years, who first called my attention to the way our praying sometimes sounds to those unfamiliar with the words. Earl had gone to church with us on Holy Thursday and had listened to our recitation of the rosary during the hour of adoration. When we returned from church his mother asked him how he liked the service. "All right," he answered, "but it sounded like they kept saying 'Strawberry shortcake, gooseberry pie'."

Earl was not trying to be facetious. He was telling as faithfully as he could what a child can hear while listening to us pray. I must confess that I was in the third or fourth grade before I knew that



"Have mercy on us" was not "Have Mary Sonnus." It is common enough to hear "Praaaaf'rus," "Have merzynous," "Lord hearsa." It is a language that can be understood only in heaven. It would be difficult to illustrate in type what really follows the Mass in some places. Perhaps it would look something like this: "HOLY Mary, mmm-m-m-n-n-n-n."

I was once asked by a professor in a State University before the entire class, "Why do Catholics pray so fast?" He had recently attended a Mass and was expressing his wonderment. I was not able to give him a satisfactory answer.

Another non-Catholic wrote to THE GRAIL after reading the series on Church Manners:

"Thus far I believe there is one thing you have not mentioned. Perhaps it is on your agenda for later mention, or maybe it is not worthy of mention. Knowing the Catholic Church emphasizes unity I have often wondered why the prayers, for instance, are not said in unison. When the rosary is prayed there seems to be the Biblical minority who want to get it through and over with. They make the circuit and touch home plate before the balance reach second base . . . When it comes to congregational singing, not so good either. There is one lady in particular who insists on traveling in low gear, always a couple of beats behind the rest, so that when the verse is finished her final note partakes of an echo."

To be fair, of course, there are probably as many churches where the prayers are said slowly, devoutly, and in unison as there are churches where perfunctory muttering sustained for the length of a ten-count takes the place of prayer. The faults that mar our community praying are more or less the same everywhere. The lack of a leader seems to cause most of them. No one wants to assume the lead, and the result is that in modesty all whisper their prayers instead of using their voices. School children have no such complex. Their elders would not care to imitate their drawl, but they could learn the beauty of keeping together. We cannot vouch for the words they say. "F'give us our trass-pass-es zwee f'rgive thoses trasspass 'gainst us . . ." But the Lord understands this brand of pigeon English.

We cannot be sure He understands us, though, when we try the duet recitation, overlapping with the priest. The words "thy womb, Jesus," become merged into "Holy Mary," and it sounds like "Tym-besujdrph kgybulypo."

HOW TO PRAY VOCALLY

There is no denying that praying to the tempo and the pitch of others is sometimes a great trial. . . Invariably there is the rapid-fire tenor who can say a decade a minute and wants to prove it. Somewhere, too, is sure to be a "monotone" who starts late, and keeps his distance all the way to end two words after the *Amen*. Somewhere in between is the golden mean. To attain this is quite simple. Since we are all saying the same words, we must all be thinking the same thoughts. Our inflections and our phrasing are the same everywhere. Hence the secret seems to lie in thinking about what we are saying, pronouncing each word exactly, but not in a poky manner. Then in response to the priest's "Most Sacred Heart of Jesus" we will not say "M-Mmmmmnnnnn," but "Have mercy on us." Those who think of the meaning will naturally stress

slightly the word *mercy*. That will suffice to keep all in unison. Sometimes the trouble grows out of a lack of knowledge of the prayers. They then sound like the second stanza of the "Star Spangled Banner,"

Blessed be mmmmm ever mmm shall stand,
Their loved home mmm n n mm desolation.

In that case the remedy consists in a little study or the use of a prayerbook during the recitation of the prayers.

Some pastors have found that a general rehearsal of the prayers on a Sunday, perhaps during the sermon time, helps to bring order out of chaos. If that is not practical everywhere, a rehearsal in one or more of the societies or sodalities will help. Where a mission is given it is good to take the occasion to inject a little propriety into these prayers.

AND SINGING

It is usually so difficult to get Catholic people to sing in church that it is with special reluctance one writes about that, lest those who do sing feel fearful and stop singing altogether. Singing in community is a beautiful practice and one that brought much devotion to the Middle Ages. After the Reformation the practice was abandoned in many places because the Reformers were using it—sometimes to spread heretical teachings. But singing is not exclusively the right of the Protestant Churches. We have lost something in abandoning the custom and ought by all means to restore it.

While our praying is usually too fast our singing is usually too slow. It is this dragging that discourages the good singers and the musicians from supporting congregational singing. But singing need not be slow, even when large crowds take part in it. Singing should be joyful, jubilant.

The Gregorian Chant some find fit only for Requiems because much of the chant we hear is sung as to a Requiem. It is not always Holy Week. The joys of Easter and of the feasts cannot be expressed in the mournful strains of the *Stabat Mater* and *Vexilla Regis*. A lamentation in protracted pauses is never Catholic. Catholics are joyful people and when we are joyful we sing; when we are in pain we groan.

In this matter choirs have an obligation toward the parish. They will cultivate either a taste for or a distaste for ecclesiastical music in the congregation, depending on their execution of the music. Too often their efforts turn out to be neither prayer nor song, but a demonstration for human ears. The beautiful and chaste strains of plain chant have always been the choice of Mother Church in preference to operatic arrangements, and when

(Continued on page 372)

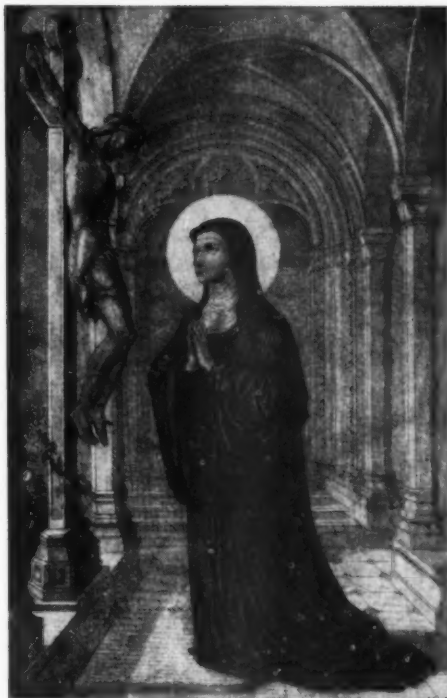
St. Gertrude the Great, Mystic

(Feast, November 17.)

Albert Kleber, O.S.B., S.T.D.

WE TO a great extent have lost the understanding and the love of the things that are above, of the things supernatural; we are readily attracted by the things of sense and gladly lend ourselves to their distractions. But it is encouraging that at all times there are also men and women who, though they walk upon this earth with a firm and steady step, keep their eyes fixed on heaven and with delight breathe the invigorating air of faith. Most of these God leads along the ordinary ways of Christian life, in particular of prayer; but there always are some whom He favors also with extraordinary, even mystic, states of Christian life, especially of prayer. St. Gertrude, whom an admiring Christian world calls the Great, not only belongs to this latter class; she has become an example and leader for all who strive to have grace develop in them to the full its divine intent—for all to whom the natural life, together with the external practice of religion, is only the taking-off ground toward what St. Paul calls "living to God" to the extent of "it is now no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2, 19-20).

Many leading writers on the spiritual life, especially on the contemplative life and the mystic states of prayer, have in times past acknowledged the special beauty and value of the interior life of St. Gertrude as reflected in her writings. Among these writers are the Dominican F. Theodor of Apolda, a personal acquaintance of Gertrude, who examined her writings very minutely; the great ascetical writer, Abbot Blossius, of the sixteenth century, who used to study her writings carefully twelve times a year; the Carthusian Lansperg of Cologne; St. Francis de Sales; and, in more modern times, Father Frederick William Faber. This last mentioned master of the interior life, disapproving of the "regimental kind of holiness," which, he says, is a "failure" by reason of its "want of liberty of spirit," writes: "Neither should we omit to claim for this purpose the patronage of St. Ger-



St. Gertrude the Great—Fr. Andrew, O.S.B. (Beuron)

trude, who was eminent even among the Saints for her wonderful spirit of incessant praise. If we could imitate her in this, we might come at length to a participation in her equally wonderful liberty of spirit... I wish men could be persuaded to study St. Gertrude more than they do; for certainly our great defect is the want of liberty of spirit... Where the law of the Lord is, where the spirit of Christ is, there is liberty. No one can be at all acquainted with the old-fashioned Benedictine school of spiritual writers, without perceiving and admiring the beautiful liberty of spirit which pervades and possesses their whole mind. It is just what we would expect of an order of such matured traditions... St. Gertrude is a fair specimen of them. She is thoroughly Benedictine... A spirit of breadth, a spirit of liberty, that is the Catholic spirit; and it was eminently the badge of the old Benedictine ascetics. Modern writers for the most part have tightened things, and have lost by it, instead of gaining." (*All For Jesus*, chap. VII, VIII.)

It is strange that of one so prominent in the highest things of life so few natural details should be extant; but this very lack tends to make us center our attention all the more sharply and appreciative-

ly on her spiritual self as revealed abundantly and clearly in her writings, which in reality are her spiritual autobiography.

Gertrude was born on January 6, 1256, probably in the landgraviate Thuringia, Germany. We have no certain knowledge either of the place of her birth or of her family, but from the ease with which she repeatedly draws illustrations from court life one might conclude that she was of noble descent. In the fifth year of her age she was brought to the convent at Helfta for her education.

At that time there lived in the convent at Helfta nuns of the Cistercian branch of the Order of St. Benedict. This convent, originally founded at Mansfeld in 1229, was transferred to Rodardsdorf in 1234, and in 1258, to Helfta, a suburb of Eisleben, in Saxony.

At Helfta little Gertrude was received into the loving arms of Gertrude of Hackeborn, the abbess. Gertrude of Hackeborn, the abbess, with whom Gertrude the Great, the mere nun, is not to be confused, was a woman endowed with noble gifts of mind and heart; under her care Helfta reached a most flourishing state. In the conducting of the convent school she was ably assisted by her equally gifted blood sister, St. Mechtilde of Hackeborn. Their most illustrious pupil, St. Gertrude the Great, later in her writings paid both a loving tribute.

Gertrude's earliest biographer, who wrote soon after her death, gives us this character sketch of the young pupil: "Even though in years and bodily development only a wee little maiden, yet she showed a disposition so earnest, lovable, tractable and pleasing, and in all things so docile that all who heard her were astonished, for, when she was sent to school, she excelled in so quick a perception and understanding that she surpassed all her schoolmates as well as her fellow-religious. In this manner she passed the years of her childhood and of her youth with a pure heart and a joyous eagerness to learn the liberal arts."

There is one important trait in Gertrude's character that is not mentioned by her ancient biographer. She was by nature possessed of an energetic, even impulsive and irascible temperament, in consequence of which she found it hard to bear with moral weaknesses in others, especially with negligence in religious observance. She was well aware of this, her predominant temperament, because she felt that she stood in need especially of meekness and patience (*Ambassador of Divine Love*, Book I, chap. 16; Book III, chap. 30, § 27). On the other hand this energetic temperament inclined her to apply herself promptly and generously to anything that she recognized to be her duty. Thus her ener-

gy served her well when divine grace called upon her to renounce all that was gratifying to mere human nature in order to devote herself with all her heart and soul to the promptings of God's special love for her. We are inclined to think of mystics as dreamers and as suffering from sentimentalism (sentiment gone sick); however, the true mystics must be persons of strong will ennobled by grace, else they could not effect the natural relinquishment that God demands of them in exchange for Himself. Sentimentalism is a weakness of mysticists (false mystics); it has no place in the true mystic.

And here we must keep in mind also that Gertrude was possessed in an excellent manner of what is called the German *Gemuete*—for which the English language has no equivalent—an ability to experience and to express the most delicate sentiment without becoming sentimental. This *Gemuete*, together with her other qualities of heart and mind developed harmoniously in her education, gave her the ability to express herself elegantly—also in Latin—concerning the most tender manifestations of God's love for her, and that with an imagery indicative of exceptional poetic talent, of which later. In fact, she once refers to a poem of hers; but, unfortunately, this has been lost.

It is not known when Gertrude made her religious profession, but from the fact that her ancient biographer says "that in school she surpassed all her schoolmates as well as her fellow-religious" one could gather that she was professed at an early age, that is, when she was still attending school—early religious profession being not unknown in those times.

Having mastered the "liberal arts," she devoted herself to the more congenial study of theology, chiefly in the form of study of the Holy Scripture. Her biographer says of her that "without growing weary she studied all the books of Holy Scripture available to her or that she could procure and she filled the hive of her heart to the brim with salutary and honeyed sayings of Holy Scripture, so that a divine and edifying word was at her disposal at all times." To this she added a knowledge of the works of the Fathers, especially of St. Augustine and St. Bernard. All these intellectual accomplishments imparted to her spoken word as well as to the written a soundness of doctrine and clearness and agreeableness of diction that were astounding, especially after she had given herself to the cultivation of the interior life. As a consequence, she was consulted by many.

It was in the twenty-sixth year of her life that a great change came over her, a change which, as she recognized, was brought about by God. She noted

the very day and hour and other circumstances of this her "conversion." It was not a conversion from the state of grievous sin to a state of penance and ordinary monastic virtue that so indelibly impressed itself upon Gertrude's mind; it was a taking hold of her whole being on the part of God, at the same time turning her from a state of commonplace good-enough-ness to a state of supernatural awareness of and surrender to God, in particular to the Divine Word Incarnate. It was from that time on that divine grace developed in her the mystic states, especially of prayer, which she attained to so high a degree. It was during the advent season previous to the feast of Epiphany on which she completed the twenty-fifth year of her age that God imparted to her a keen sorrow over her past neglect of spiritual opportunities and a complete detachment from all created good, including her health and even the studies she had until then so ardently pursued. This at first produced in her the sense of a great void and of confusion; but consequent upon this detachment, this thorough interior housecleaning, "the twenty-sixth year having been begun, on the Monday before the feast of Purification, on January 27, at the beginning of dusk of that day, after compline," He, the Uncreated Good, drew her soul to Himself in a spiritual espousal and union which became permanent. It is she herself who in her *Ambassador of Divine Love*, Book II, chap. 1, records this change which God effected in her life. From that day on, January 27, 1280, till her death, in 1311, in the fifty-sixth year of her life,—in the Benedictine Order her feast is celebrated on November 17—Gertrude clung to God and dealt with Him with the familiarity of a devoted spouse; and God seemed to outdo Himself in showering His love upon her in a manner quite above the ordinary working of grace, making her perhaps the most appealing of all the mystics.

Mysticism, as commonly employed, is a vague term; to be understood, it must first be presented in its definite meaning. At times the term mysticism is used—but wrongly so—to designate the claim and effort to come into contact and union with God by merely natural means, as though God could be made subservient to human endeavor. Theosophy, magic, and occultism make such a claim. Pantheists claim substantial union with God, whom they take to be the ultimate principle of the universe. Our American transcendentalists of the last century had a tinge of sentimental mysticism. All that is false mysticism. True mysticism exists only in the Christian religion in its integrity, because mysticism presupposes the right concept of God and has its taproot in sanctifying grace. In a general sense the whole Christian religion is a mysticism,

because all the truths of our holy faith are divine mysteries, divine truths, of the existence of which—but not of their rational understanding—divine revelation assures us.

The term mysticism in its definite meaning designates a special mysterious vital union between God and a soul—the soul retaining its personal identity—which union is brought about by a special grace. On the part of God this grace results in a most intimate communication and manifestation of Himself to the soul. To this there must correspond, on the part of man, thorough detachment from all created good and a complete surrender of self to God, in which surrender all created good is properly related to God. St. Gertrude was granted this union. Her surrender to the urgings of this special grace was complete. In consequence she was raised from ordinary prayer to the highest contemplation. By reason of this union she was accorded also apparitions, spiritual transports and ecstasies, and other special favors both for her own sanctification and for the benefit of others.

What is to be held concerning such mystic occurrences? They are supernatural states which show forth perception and enjoyment of God and of things divine to which we with all our natural strength and trying cannot attain; yet by attending well to the ordinary prayer in its fourfold stages of oral, meditation, affective, and simple (ordinary) contemplative prayer, we can dispose ourselves for this special grace of God. The nature and purpose of ordinary prayer is sufficiently known. In meditation we gather truths and motives for affective and for the ordinary contemplative prayer. In affective prayer, that is, in the prayer of the affective will, one, having by means of meditation—formal or otherwise—come into possession of a truth of faith and having evaluated it, now enjoys it, pouring forth his feelings of love, reverence, thanksgiving, sorrow, and so forth. It is also called the prayer of the heart inasmuch as the work of the mind seeking in meditation the truth or good is held in abeyance, and simple contemplation of the truth or good predominates. Anyone in whom the love of God, of self, and of neighbor is properly ordered and who gives himself time to rest interiorly with God—either directly or with one of His truths—can, under the influence of ordinary grace, attain to this kind of contemplation, even as in the natural order we find rest of soul and delight in something true, good, or beautiful with which we are confronted, especially when we can call it our own.

These preparatory stages of prayer may—yet do not necessarily—lead to the extraordinary mystic graces through which God designs to bring about in

us the still higher mystic contemplation of, and union with, Himself. As this union progresses, the direct action of God upon the properly disposed soul becomes evermore pronounced and irresistible. Also in this higher union there are four stages: the incomplete mystic union or the *prayer of quiet*; the complete, half-ecstatic union; the ecstatic union, called also the mystic espousal; and, finally, the transforming "divinizing" union, or the mystic nuptials of the soul with God. The first three of these four stages are properly one and the same grace, the grace of the non-transforming union. In these three stages the soul is filled ever more with heavenly sweetness, at times passing into ecstasy, so that finally the contact of the senses with the outside world is suspended. The mystics call these stages also the silence of the soul—hence the name, prayer of quiet—the exaltation of the soul, love transport, and wounding of the soul, and speak of this union simply as of mystic contemplation. This stage is often accompanied with an objective spiritual awareness of God, by "a being touched by God" interiorly. Gertrude repeatedly speaks of this "spiritual contact" or "spiritual embrace." The fourth and most perfect stage of the higher mystic union, the transforming union, is brought about by the mystic nuptials of the soul with God. In this there is included an almost permanent union with God even during external occupation, a transformation of the higher faculties of the soul which affects also its manner of activity, a transformation which imparts to the soul a strength greater than it ever had before.

Visions of the senses or of the imagination, prophecies, the imprint of the sacred wounds (stigmata) of Christ and other charismatic gifts, which frequently accompany the higher mystic life, though they captivate our attention most, are of less importance; the genuine mystics not only did not hanker after them; as a rule they mistrusted and even feared them. As a matter of fact, publicity-seeking, no matter how covered, by reason of these charisms ought invariably to render them suspect to us.

Of course, all the genuine mystics show forth the essentials of mysticism, but from the human circumstances with which these essentials are bound up in the lives of the mystics, mysticism takes on the variety of human life: the mysticism of St. Paul varies from that of St. John; the mysticism of St. Augustine from that of St. Bernard; the mysticism of the Church in the East from that of the Church of the West: the Eastern mysticism indeed also centers its attention on Christ, but preponderantly under regard of His divinity; though deeply concerned with the Word Incarnate, it deals

with Him preferably as "the Lord" abiding in His unapproachable divine majesty; whereas the Western mysticism, in its full flowering since the eleventh century, feels itself familiar with the winning loveliness of the humanity of the Savior, who through it most effectively leads us to faith and love and union with His divinity. Of this latter type is the mysticism of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, of St. Francis of Assisi, and of the whole troop of spiritual minnesingers of that age.

Several factors are to be kept in mind as having contributed strongly to these special traits of the Western mysticism since the end of the eleventh century: first, since 1095, the Crusades, fervently stressing the sacredness of the Holy Places by reason of the birth, life and work, and death of the Savior, focused the attention of Christianity more upon His humanity and aroused a special sense of loyalty to it not only among warlike knights and yeomen but also among hearts given to the cultivation of the interior life; secondly, the *Canticum* of Canticles, which in the eleventh century found entrance into German literature and thereafter became as it were a textbook of Western mysticism. Finally, in attempting to appreciate the particular form of mysticism that was St. Gertrude's, we must, in addition to these factors, keep in mind her natural qualities and accomplishments already mentioned.

St. Gertrude reveals her devotional life in her two extant works, *The Ambassador of Divine Love* (*Legatus Divini Amoris*) and *Exercises* (*Exercitia*). The first consists of two parts, of which the first contains two books, the second, three. The first book of the first part treats of St. Gertrude and was written by an unknown author after Gertrude's death; it contains also some of her "revelations." The second book alone was written by St. Gertrude herself, whereas the third, the fourth, and the fifth book, which constitute the second part, were dictated by her. Her other work, the *Exercises*—usually called *Spiritual Exercises*—reveals her ardent devotional life even better than does *The Ambassador* . . . No mere description of these *Exercises* can do justice to them; to be appreciated they must be made one's own. They are a connected series of devotions, mainly for religious, intended to cover a period of seven days. One could profitably use them as supplementary private devotion during a retreat or even make them the basis of a private seven full days retreat of intimate spiritual intercourse with God.

The spirituality that Gertrude manifests in these writings is, doctrinally, sound and, devotionally, cheering and heartening. She draws from the purest sources: thoughts from the Fathers of the

Church and from Holy Scripture, especially from the Psalms and the Canticle of Canticles, coalesce freely and naturally with those of her own cultivated mind. The imagery of the Canticle of Canticles in particular she not only employs but even develops—at times even daringly. As a result, she speaks of the deepest mysteries of our faith with a surprising ease and grace, an elegance which at times results in poetic gems.

In passing, just a few samples of her poetic quality. She prays: "See, before Thee stands the empty cup of my desire." Giving thanks: "I return to Thee what is Thine and, giving it back as echo, I sing praise and thanks to the accompaniment on that sweet-sounding instrument, Thy divine Heart." Speaking of Christ's words to her, she, referring to herself in the third person, says: "Then she heard—as one hears interiorly in the heart—a voice lovely resounding, like that of a citharist who with ingratiating melody lured from his cither these words: . . ." Several passages show her capable also of sustained lyric description.—She avails herself also of very homely illustrations. For instance, she speaks of Christ desirous of conversing also with the less perfect, especially in Holy Communion—contrary to the rigoristic demands of some—as comparing Himself to a royal prince who to the dismay of his exacting tutor delights in playing ball in the street with children below his rank or with the poor.—Both her humor and her common sense manner of turning even a temptation into good appear in this passage: "When at prayer or at any other good work a thought of vainglory would overtake her, she would acquiesce to it in the sense that, if others see her good work and be induced to follow her example, God will derive at least some good from her, and she would picture to herself that she was in the Church of God what a scarecrow is to a householder: it serves no other purpose than to be fastened above the tree when the fruit is ripening in order to scare away the birds and so to preserve the fruit."

Moreover, she both understood and appreciated what the liturgy is to the Church at large and to each person in particular: to her the liturgy was not an inert mass of words and ceremonies to be performed—if ever so punctiliously—nor a mere esthetic occupation; to her holy Mass, the Sacraments, the Divine Office, the Feasts, the Processions, indeed all the accepted liturgical activity, were the Church's—hence her own—public worship of God and, as far as her good was concerned, from day to day of the liturgical year fountains of living waters, from which she drew with joy and which in turn became in her a faithful source of private devotion pervading every phase of her daily life. As

a consequence, the whole sphere of her life became centered in Christ—more particularly in His Sacred Heart—to a degree that even anything she heard about the Blessed Virgin or the Saints, or anything good and beautiful, she readily referred to Him.

This brings up the point of her devotion to the Sacred Heart. Only ignorance of the intense part St. Gertrude has taken in this devotion could serve as excuse for the popular error that devotion to the Sacred Heart took its rise in the seventeenth century. To St. Gertrude this devotion became eminently practical both unto the centralizing of her devotional and unto the sanctifying of her work-a-day life. Christ offered her His Heart as a "temple" in which she might dwell habitually and around which, yet as within the precincts of His body, she might establish her monastic enclosure where she might carry on her daily activity; accordingly, she made His feet the corridor and the washroom; His hands, the work room; His mouth, the speaking room; and His ears, the confessional. Thus her daily life became an intensely Christlike life; Christ Himself suggested the similarity between Gertrude and Himself when He assured a person contemporary to her: "In the heart of Gertrude you will find Me."

It would be interesting to consider also her deep and clear insight into the propriety and benefit of frequent Communion and into the Church as the mystic body of Christ; in each of these she anticipated the pronouncements and enactments of the Church of the twentieth century.

Likewise must we pass over her virtues. To focus our attention on any one of them might impair for us the estimate of her well-balanced spiritual character, which in its pure harmony made of her short life so entrancing a *Te Deum laudamus*; yet this harmony is not disturbed; rather is it all the more clearly perceived on the first fundamental of her humility. In view of her spiritual weaknesses and imperfections, of which at least she was sincerely convinced, she could account for our Lord's generosity toward her only by the consideration that as the brilliance of gold is enhanced by being embedded upon a ground of black, so God's loving benevolence appears all the more glorious against the background of her ingratitude.

"Such was the Saint," writes Father Faber, having quoted her, especially in his work, *All For Jesus* (chap. VIII), "the special Saint of praise and of devout desires! Oh that she could be in the Church once more, as she was in ages past, the doctress and the prophetess of the interior life, like Debhora, who sat beneath her palm in Mount Ephraim, uttering her canticles and judging Israel."

William Meets the Army



Illustration
by Lewis Hellwig



IT TOOK no stretch of the imagination to call William's train trip essential. His parents adored him and hoped he'd grow up to be president, but 50 weeks out of the year with William called for a rest.

Grandfather and Grandmother Griggs who for some mysterious reason seemed to enjoy the devil-

try of their ten year old grandson had extended the invitation. William had been pleased. His mother had been enthusiastic. His father had been relieved, and Lillybelle the cook had given loud shouts of joy.

As the train gradually started William on his Florida journey, he leaned over a corporal and waved goodbye. Then safely out of sight he immediately opened his lunch and with the help of the corporal devoured it three hours ahead of schedule.

"You joining the Army?" asked the Corporal who evidently understood ten year old boys.

"Not yet," answered William truthfully. "I'm going to visit my Grandmother and Grandfather Griggs. Grandfather Griggs used to make coffee for Buffalo Bill."

"Say! that is something." The corporal gave a loud whistle of approval. "Hey Sarge, William here has a grandfather who made coffee for Buffalo Bill."

Sensing a little diversion from what had been a long tiresome train trip, the Sarge and a private called Skeets reversed their day coach chair and joined in the conversation.

"Where you headed for William?" asked the Sarge.

Enjoying the sudden military interest in his trip, William didn't want to disappoint his audience. "My Grandfather Griggs raises alligators," he explained. "He's gonna teach me how to put 'em to sleep by rubbing their stomachs."

The soldiers were sufficiently impressed. William didn't feel that he had fibbed about this. After all his Grandfather did have a baby alligator and had told him about stomach rubbing making them sleepy.

"Your Grandfather must live in Florida," guessed Skeets. "That's where we're going."

William thought he'd better ask a question before he enlarged the alligator story. "Florida's pretty big, ain't it Skeets?"

"It's big enough for both soldiers and alligators I guess," smiled the private. "What town does it say on your ticket?"

William guessed Florida was big enough for the soldiers to be going somewhere else. "The ticket man just told me to stay on the train until he hollers Clearwater. Grandfather's sposed to meet me."

"Clearwater's a nice town," said the Sarge—"We're going to Tampa. That's not so far."

"How far?" asked William hoping it was far enough.

"Oh we'll be over some week-end to see your alligators. That is if your Grandfather won't mind."

William wished he hadn't mentioned the alligators, but he didn't want his friends to think Grandfather Griggs wouldn't like them. "Grandfather Griggs likes soldiers," he said. "He might even give you an alligator."

This definitely interested the soldiers who were from practically alligatorless towns. "I'm sure glad we ran into you, William," said the Corporal. "I'm gonna send mine to my girl. She's never seen one."

The Sarge and Skeets were also enthusiastic.—"William, you tell your Grandfather to save us three nice little ones," said Sarge, "I'll bring the boys over this Saturday. That's day after tomorrow. What street does your Grandfather live on?"

William believed in telling the truth. "He lives on Oak Street. And the alligators are in the back yard."

"O.K. William. We'll be there, but you be sure not to put 'em to sleep until we get there. I've never seen an alligator put to sleep."

William wondered how he ever got into such situations. Somehow or other he managed to get out of most of them, but this would take some tall thinking. Then he remembered how Grandfather Griggs had taken care of the Tin Can Shenny situation and he felt better. Grandfather Griggs could always think of something.

The train trip was much too pleasant to let anything worry William. The Corporal bought Hot Dogs and Pop and the Sergeant taught him how to work a compass. When his friends finally changed trains for Tampa, they had struck a bargain with William. He'd see that they got an alligator apiece and they'd give him a ride in a jeep.

Grandfather and Grandmother Griggs were at the station to meet him.—"I thought you'd be riding up with the engineer," said his Grandfather.—"There's not much excitement anywhere else on a train."

"I met some soldiers," said William proudly.

Grandfather Griggs chuckled.—"I guess that explains it. Well anyhow, William, it took the Army to keep you out of trouble."

William felt it would be wise not to explain about the alligators until he had Grandfather Griggs alone. His Grandmother was nice and bought him double Jumbo Lemon Soda's, but he wasn't sure she'd understand about the Alligators. He let the matter rest for the time being.

The next afternoon Grandmother Griggs went shopping and William found his Grandfather in the porch hammock. Following his usual custom at home, he found a not too uncomfortable spot underneath the hammock and opened the conversation with what a professor might call a leading question.

"Grandfather, do all alligators go to sleep when you rub their stomachs?"

"You can bet your boots they do, William." The old gentleman's tone implied a story. "Did I ever tell you about the time a one-eyed Indian took me alligator hunting in the everglades?"

William knew the story by heart, but he wanted to keep the conversation on alligators. "You started to tell it," he explained, "but I had to go to bed before you finished it."

Grandfather Griggs snorted, "I didn't think I'd finished it. If there's one thing I hate it's for somebody to interrupt us when we're talking man talk. Where in tarnation did I leave off?"

"The one-eyed Indian was rassling with a big alligator under water." William liked this part of the story best.

"Well sir," Grandfather Griggs took up the tale. "That one-eyed Indian broke the world's record for staying under water. He didn't get a drop of breath for ten minutes."

"Who had the record before the one-eyed Indian broke it?" William had a knack for this kind of question.

Grandfather Griggs took the question in stride. "If I'm not mistaken it was a fellow named Clancy.—Well finally I see an alligator come flying outa the water and it landed about twenty feet from the shore."

"Was it dead?"

"It was live enough to start after me."—The hammock rocked violently as Grandfather Griggs used his hands to make the story more effective.

"What happened to the one-eyed Indian?"

"I was just coming to that.—Well the one-eyed Indian scrambled to shore and flipped that big gator on his back just as he was getting ready to make alligator pie outa your old grandfather."

"Then what happened?"

"That's when I learned how to put alligators to sleep by rubbing their stomachs."

"Did the one-eyed Indian put that Alligator to sleep?"

"You bet your boots he did. I never saw anything like it. He just started rubbing his stomach and all of a sudden that gator's feet stopped kicking and he went to sleep as harmless as a kitten."

William felt this a good time to inject his soldiers into the conversation.—"Grandfather, I told those soldiers on the train about how you put alligators to sleep."

This pleased Grandfather Griggs.—"I'll bet they never heard anything like that before. What did they think of it?"

"They said they'd like to see it." William hoped his Grandfather would think of some way to arrange it. "I told 'em to come over and you'd show 'em."

Grandfather Griggs had a slight hunch there was more to the story. "Are they over in Tampa, William?"

"Yes Sir and Sarge said he'd bring Skeets and the Corporal over tomorrow. I'm gona ride in their jeep."

"Fine, William. We'll be glad to have 'em. Both your Grandmother and I like soldiers."

William was relieved, but there was still the matter of the alligators. "Will you show 'em how to put alligators to sleep by rubbing their stomachs?"

Grandfather Griggs gave this question a little thought. "Well, William, we don't want to disappoint the soldiers. If I can catch that gator in the back yard pool, I'll do my durndest to put him to sleep."

Just as William was about to confide about the bargain he'd made with the soldiers, Grandmother Griggs came in from her shopping and joined them. When told about the coming visit from the Army she offered no objection. In fact she seemed as pleased as Grandfather Griggs, but William was sure she wouldn't approve of the promise he'd made.

When Saturday dawned, William tried in vain to get Grandfather Griggs alone long enough to ex-

plain that he'd promised his friends an alligator apiece.

Around three o'clock, Sarge drove up with the Corporal and Skeets. Grandmother Griggs suggested they give William his ride in the Jeep and then come back for some supper.—Grandfather Griggs was busy trying to fish his gator out of the backyard pool.

William rode off with his friends feeling a little bad about not being able to keep his side of the bargain. His faith in miracles was badly shaken, but he could worry about supplying the alligators when the time came. Riding in a Jeep was too much fun to worry about anything.

Grandmother Griggs saw them off and went to help in the alligator hunt. She was greeted with an invitation to look into a large packing box her husband was using as a gator cage.

Grandmother Griggs was not pleased. "Some neighbor must have dumped them into our pool.—Well I won't stand for it," she said firmly. "You've got to get rid of them. "One alligator is pest enough and I certainly won't have four of them cluttering up my pool."

"But they're just little ones." Grandfather Griggs thought a pool with more than one alligator might prove interesting.

Grandmother Griggs stood her ground.—"I meant every word I said. You'll just have to get rid of them."

"How?" for once in his life Grandfather Griggs was stumped.

His wife had a suggestion. "You're such a good talker. Maybe you can talk those soldiers into taking them."

Grandfather Griggs thought it over and a mischievous gleam came into his eyes. "They might at that," he said. "I believe they might take 'em, just to please William."

OUR COVER

The Preface of the Requiem

The Preface to the Canon, or principal part of the Mass, has been the inspiration for the cover of this issue.

The symbol (Chi-rho) resplendent over the catafalque is the ancient monogram of Christ, in whom the *hope* of a blessed resurrection hath shone upon us. (It combines the Christogram XP, the cross, and the anchor, the symbol of hope.)

"Unto the faithful, O Lord, life is changed not

taken away." The departed Christian soul is absorbed in Christ, who is eternal life.

The crown of life is held by an angel, standing guard beside the catafalque.

In the rite of absolution the celebrating priest incenses the body, the smoke ascending as a prayer to the throne of the Almighty, and with the angels and archangels, with thrones and dominions, and with all the heavenly hosts, joins in the praise of His glory.

Racial Prejudice in the Cradle

Anne Tansey

TWO twelve-year-old boys, the children of friends, were passing by. They came in to see me and to talk awhile. They were filled to overflowing with the emotion of hatred, racial hatred. They were so "burned up" about an incident that had just occurred that they were extremely anxious to voice their complaints to the first available acquaintance.

The boys were returning home from an amusement park where colored children sought to enjoy the slides, the swings, the roller coaster and merry-go-round. My two young friends were so highly incensed at the presence of the colored children in their midst that they left the grounds immediately in protest.

"Isn't it awful when niggers are allowed in amusement parks?" Jack complained bitterly.

"Something has to be done about it," Billy said with a determined air.

"What can be done about it, boys?" I inquired quietly.

The tone of my voice warned Billy that he was in for opposition. He sprang swiftly to a poorly conceived defense, "Well, the white people make everything don't they? The niggers can't make anything themselves, yet they want to use the things that white people make."

"Why don't negroes make things?" I asked. "Why aren't they allowed to work in factories where things are made?"

"Because they aren't any good. They are too lazy to work. They want the white people to pay taxes to feed them."

"That isn't true Billy. Negroes are just as anxious to work and make things as white people are but the white people won't give the negroes a chance. Many white people refuse to work with colored people."

Jack took issue at that. He was certain the dart was aimed at him. His father worked in an aircraft

factory where employees had staged a strike on D Day because to improve production the management found it necessary to transfer seven negro workers from the colored division to the white section. Fifteen thousand workers refused to make planes, the lack of which might cost thousands of Americans soldiers their lives on the battlefields of France or Italy, or in the South Pacific. Fifteen thousand white workers ceased work and crippled production rather than tolerate the presence of seven helpless negroes who were merely obeying orders in accepting the new posts assigned them.

"I don't blame my father," Jack cried. "I wouldn't work with niggers either."

"White children in the city schools attend classes with negro children," I reminded him.

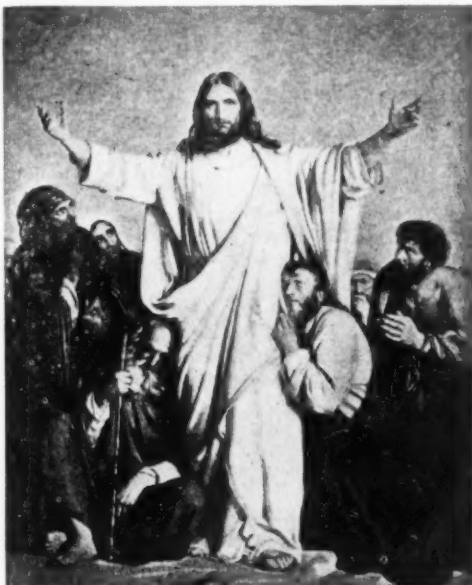
"They better not come to our school. We've moved up here to this hilltop to get away from negroes and we won't let them come up," Jack maintained.

"Negroes could scarcely afford to live up here," I said. "They are so poor they have to remain in the slums. But if they could afford to come up they would have to attend your school you know." The boys were both students of the Public School.

Billy looked at me with rebellious eyes. "That's just the trouble," he said darkly. "There's nothing we can do to keep the niggers down because the Law is on their side. The Law doesn't give us white people any protection against them. They can ride on our street cars and go to our shows."

"Yes," Jack seconded, "and they keep wanting everything we've got. There's so many of them. They have so many children, they keep getting more and more population."

"That's true," I agreed. "The negroes are growing in population while the white people aren't. Both of you are 'only boys' in your families. Many negro



families have three or four boys."

"The only thing we can do about that," Jack said from the depths of war era wisdom, "is to get together and kill them off." Billy nodded perfect agreement. I could scarcely believe my ears. This was an actual conversation, not a figment of imagination. I looked into the boys' wide blue eyes. They weren't wicked eyes. The faces that housed them were typical freckled American boy faces. Yet the dark criminal thoughts in the immature minds startled me to the depths of my being. Guileless faced Billy backed up his companion, "That's how we are getting rid of the Japs and Nazis, by killing them off. When the soldiers come home they can start in killing the niggers, then maybe we can have some peace."

"No man ever finds peace after committing murder, boys," I counseled.

"Oh no," they agreed, "murder is a terrible thing but killing niggers wouldn't be murder. That would be war. Race war. Our soldiers are used to killing in war by now."

"It may be," I contradicted, "that our soldiers will have seen so much killing by the time they get home that they will realize that there must be a better way to solve our difficulties than by killing."

"Maybe you don't understand soldiers," Jack inserted slyly. His mind was filled with the glory of Hollywood war, flags flying, tanks rumbling by, cheering crowds and slender young frames encased in colorful uniforms.

"I believe I know soldiers a good deal better than you do, Jack. There are four stars in our window there. I helped to bring two of them up. I remember when they were small boys like you. In those days small boys were taught to hate war and killing."

It might seem silly to argue in such a manner with two mere children. I didn't consider it so. They had wrong ideas which I was trying to counteract. I would have spoken to their parents concerning the poison in their minds but I knew it would do no good. The boys had imbibed their prejudices in their homes. Years of association with their parents and grandparents had acquainted me too well with their ideas on the racial question. They prided themselves on their religious tolerance but racially they were as far apart as the North and South Poles from true Christianity. The children were merely the products of their environments.

After careful thought I wondered if it mightn't be far better for all white children to go to school with negro children instead of being so totally segregated from them. In school they would come to realize that negro children were human beings

like themselves striving for the same educational goals, suffering the same little woes and enjoying the same triumphs and school pleasures. Companionship with negroes in childhood might tend to break down bitterness and hatred between the two races.

Looking at the situation from another viewpoint the two boys were Protestants. They had not been brought up on the tenets of Catholicism which teach that all men are created in the image and likeness of God. They had never heard of the Mystical Body of Christ which brought all men into a union of brotherhood, or should, under the Fatherhood of God.

The theory sounded good to me. I thought I was on the trail to something great until the radio and newspapers carried a shameful story that blasted my theory to shreds. A colored Catholic family had had the temerity to move to a suburb of very poor homes where the rent was cheap but where negroes had never lived before.

As the suburb was predominantly Catholic and a renowned and ancient monastery crowned its summit like a beacon of hope to all the slum dwellers below, the negroes thought they would be unmolested considering that they also were Catholic. They were badly mistaken. They were made to realize that the barrier of race was a bitter one between Catholics professing the same Faith and practicing the same religion.

Four High School boys who had been reared in the monastery school entered the premises of the colored people and ordered them to leave the house and neighborhood immediately. The negroes refused to listen to their injunction and a quarrel ensued that grew in magnitude and attracted a crowd which grew to mob proportions. Like all mobs it lost its head. Instead of the parents of the guilty boys taking them home and punishing them the parents backed them up in their demands that the negroes must leave.

Stones were hurled. Every window in the offending house was broken. A veritable riot ensued. When the persons of the negro residents were attacked the police found it necessary to take them into protective custody. The mob refused to obey the voice of the Law directed at them through the police to disperse. Unable to cope with the people a police cruiser was sent to the scene and the helpless and frightened negroes were removed. A woman who rebuked the offenders for their intolerance was burned in effigy.

The rioters were predominantly Catholic. The bond of Catholicism had been broken down under racial prejudice and Catholics themselves were do-

ing the work of the Ku Klux Klan, which organization is the mortal enemy of the Catholic Church as well as of the negro. It was a shameful situation. The four guilty boys were brought to Juvenile Court for discipline. The colored people were not permitted by the authorities to return.

In this same city the Archbishop of the diocese has spent years in striving to improve the living conditions of the negro people. The priests under his supervision have been untiring in the same effort. The city has a large negro population and crime among them is appalling. The Church has spent a great deal of money educating the negro children. The Sisters in the school urged them to look upward and improve themselves in every way. When the negroes seek to carry out the advice of the priests and sisters they are met with a barrage of stones hurled from street barricades.

In other sections of the city where the populations are of mixed religions and where the living standards are even higher negroes have been allowed to settle without any armed hostilities. Those discontented with the arrangement moved themselves out farther into the suburbs. However this situation of the negro people abandoning the slums for better sections has posed another problem for the Church authorities. The Church was able to supply the negro areas in the slums with their own churches and schools. But where there are only sprinklings of Catholic colored people through other areas separate churches and schools cannot be arranged for. The result is the negro children must attend the nearest parochial school. Catholic parents in the city are incensed over the situation. They seem to think parochial schools are private schools and that Catholic negroes should attend the public schools where racial discrimination is not permitted. The Archbishop is adamant in his decision that Catholic schools are for all Catholic children.

Inasmuch as we all must learn to live together amicably in this country, regardless of color, it would be wise for the parents who resent negro children in the classroom with their own children, to realize that their attitude is one which will aggravate rather than remedy the situation. The

black, yellow and white races must learn to get along; therefore let the proper conditioning be given in the schoolrooms which are the cradles of the nation.

Contrary to public belief negro children do not carry contamination. Their race is one of the fertilest of missionary fields. They are apathetically waiting to be accepted as human beings with souls to be saved. Our missionaries travel to the ends of the earth to Christianize their jungle brothers, yet here at home our Catholic people reject the most sacred of missions, "There are others of my fold, them also must I bring."

If the Oriental and Negro races, through intolerance and hatred, are handed over to Communism, which welcomes all malcontents, there will be grave dangers to all of us here in this world and even graver dangers to those guilty for the situation on Judgment Day. We can make Catholics of millions of colored people if we will follow the teachings of Jesus. If we do not and they fall a prey to Communist agitators, then there will be safety for no one. Inflamed passions and bitterness can breed terrible social diseases.

The two Protestant boys mentioned previously will be ripe material for membership in the Ku Klux Klan if it should rise again. Catholics cannot allow themselves or their children to grow into such undesirable human beings. Yet we are on the road to it. Many Bishops, Priests and Nuns are following the pattern of Jesus in dealing with problems of race. They must not relax their efforts in spite of opposition from Catholic laity. The Church must lead the people to better understanding.

The Catholic schoolroom is one place where the Church holds indisputable sway. By opening its doors to children of all races, by teaching the children of all races cooperation and understanding, by crushing every spark of racial prejudice as it rises the next generation of Catholics can be brought up far better conditioned to meet the challenge of Christian living for all races in a free democracy than if segregation is continued and the poison of racial discrimination is allowed to continue to its logical end.





If They Could Speak

Sergeant Frank J. Kozicki

THE first big D-Day had arrived. Over the steel sides, down the ladders of woven hemp, and into waiting landing boats clambered heavily armed soldiers to be rushed to beaches of action. The mad sea frothed and churned, a boat capsized and a light tank, with three members caught inside, sank beneath the waves. On the operating table of the ship's infirmary a tall, strong, black-haired lad gasped his last. Steel slugs from a strafing plane had stitched across his abdomen. Nearby, a burning plane fell into the ocean like a blazing comet that had run its course. These men, these heroic dead, what would they say if they could speak from the Great Beyond?

Hundred of grounded, battered landing boats strewed the beaches like wave-tossed flotsam. A bullet-riddled craft was but half visible in the briny surf. Alongside lay two bodies where they fell. Their hands outstretched and faces buried in the muck, they could not feel the swirl of gritty foam that left blanket after blanket of sand over them. From the ships to the shore and beyond, Death left a crimson trail.

High up on a hill overlooking the junction of the navigable Sebou river and the Atlantic, before the gun-studded casbah, dead men marked the line of withering fire on a field

of daring and violent action. Their sacrifice was complete, total. And if they could, what would their mute lips say in one last, resurrected breath?

The weary sun rose and sank, then rose again over the littered debris of battle. Before it sank once more, we who were spared had gathered to honor those who fought and died at our side. They were our comrades but among them may have been your neighbor's boy, the lad who used to bring your groceries or your evening paper; the quiet young man you knew at the shop and who confided in you his dreams for tomorrow; the altar boy you often saw at the rail when you received your King; or the smiling stranger who guided you to the right road. Perhaps it was your pal and, but for the grace of God, it may have been your son. Slowly, the tall, young officer read a long list of their names, the same names that were embedded in metal tags nailed to low, wooden crosses gleaming in white rows above fresh mounds. We who stood silent and bowed, what would we have heard if they could speak?

Then came more military cemeteries and more gleaming white crosses on African sands. Men who had seen the sands run out for their comrades now lay beneath earthen mounds, themselves. And in Sicily and Italy more gardens of white crosses grew, gardens like those that had sprung up in the vastness of the South Pacific, gardens that spread day by day and hour by hour, knowing not any barrier of clime.

From out of the depths of them, did Death loosen his grip for an infinitesimal moment, what challenging, most universal cry would break? Revenge? No...no...no...that was the Lord's. Patriotism? Ah, no...in dying for their country they consecrated in blood the acme and the epitome of national homage. For loved ones? Neither that, for in prayers and in the last V-letter home they had commended their dearest into the hands of Mary and her Son. What, then, would they say?

Three words would escape them. Three words they shall never utter; three words they would have us hear. Yet, we dare not say, because their lips are silenced forever, that we do not hear. For, in every sigh of each reverent breeze that lightly stirs their graves, we sense those words. In the crossed shadow moving above each mound in the sun that no longer draws their burning sweat, we see those words. Deeply humble, poignant, piercing, pleading, we have their cry, "Pray for us."

Bronze plaques and monuments of stone cannot discharge that obligation. In every blessing of liberty, in every pursuit of happiness, in each want and pain and loss they warded from us by the want and pain and loss they, themselves, suffered, we must remember to pray for them who cannot pray for themselves. We, who cannot do more for them, dare not do less.

"May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace."

But We Don't Really Know Them

Rita F. Rickey

LOOKING across the abyss that seems to stretch itself between those men and women who have been designated saints, and thus got their names printed on sundry church calendars, and our own mostly unsaintly selves, how far the distance seems, and how faint the view!

True, there's a nodding acquaintance, born when we are children, when the hopeful nun who is "Teacher" passes out holy cards in symbol of merit or friendship. We note the pleasant proposition that saints are angel children, sweetly associated with flowers, and little birds, and altars, rather more than the playmates we know.

Older saints are more extraordinary. Often they stand on insubstantial clouds, white hands clasped in prayer, eyes lifted in rapture to the skies. (We only look up sometimes to see the inflexible wings of an airplane in purposeful flight.) Some wear an expression of such sweetness as to make one wonder how they got that way; others, despite a bright aura of blessedness, have a distinct air of *not* enjoying themselves. All in all, they are a beautiful people. They are not very real yet, not any more than the curly-haired princesses in fairy books.

Later, sometimes, one is so unfortunate as to dig zealously into one of the old-style biographies, where saintliness is shorn of humanity. Reading, we follow doggedly this saga of fastings and meditations, alien as a story of men from Mars. There is a reluctant admiration, faintly skeptic, for this strong soul who is not much like us. Divested of life, the saint retreats to a painted pedestal in a shadowy corner of the church.

That rigid statue discounts any resemblance to the great living original, breathes no inkling of his intense vitality, his radiant charm. And yet, this personage is one of a shining company, not always silent, never impotent.

In their own time, or shortly after, the saints attracted a great deal of attention, admiring, wistful, curious, or incredulous. Whether they walked in crowded streets or turned in to a hill-cave to pray, people knew of them, and so many liked and were influenced by them as to make the Dale Carnegie type of aspiration seem mild indeed. Death could not fetter their activity; these citizens of the after-world reach out swift hands to us, probing with healing, helpful fingers in our most prosaic ailments and discontents. It is a pity we find them difficult of approach; they are such nice people to know!

To a great extent, their pervasive charm stems from the ruling theme of their lives. They were in love with Love itself, the divine Christ. Thus sweepingly they eliminated the prime source of disillusion for worldly lovers—the discovery that a loved one can fail, sometimes in terrible betrayal, sometimes in itching matters of little moment. We do not find human frailty appealing in itself; we are gentle with it for hope of the enormous possibility of what a soul can be, and for regret that it is not yet. The saints only leaned on God, who can be depended on, now and forever.

Having found Him, they could wonderfully develop their potentialities; for Him they could do anything. They could be terribly sick, and yet not have the awful self-concentration that twists the hearts of the very ill, or very poor without degradation and despair, or misunderstood without bitterness. But the mighty faith which we sight, uncomprehending, across the abyss, was not theirs to begin with. Some of them waited and worked, and were racked with doubt and pain for years.

With the understanding heart of Christ to know them well, they could waste no time in small deceptions. Instead, they tried to know themselves, but not with that servile mistaken idea which conceives of humility as a cringing, shameful thing. They grew quite expert at the self-understanding which modern psychologists prescribe for personal happiness. Only the saints were not moved by any desperate desire to escape frustration, or break the fetters of un-normal inhibition, but by love.

Fighting stubbornly, certain of the all-importance of their goal, they prayed and drifted, and prayed again, and the praying again did it. Sometimes they found it rather a chore. St. Teresa of Avila made up her mind to daily mental prayer, her "treaty of friendship with God." Many times she found it so difficult to keep her mind where she wanted it that she could hardly wait for the clock to strike the hour that set her free.

How very like our own impatience to have done with our morning prayers and be down for coffee, or the utter weariness at getting down on our knees when we had rather settle our tired bodies in bed at once! Only she was faithful, and the presence of Christ was her recompense. We go at it with despatch, and only enough attention (perhaps) to get the words right, without recognition of the secret Listener at our hearts.

The love of the saints, after a time, brought such

intense awareness that they could not even write of their Lord or His Mother, without forgetting themselves, and shifting to direct address. Direct! Hear St. Alphonsus de Liguori, writing to his "Lady, ravisher of hearts": "Make me thy worthy child . . . Make me a Saint!" sure that she not only can but will perform this task before which a psychiatrist might quail.

He points out the difficulties like a home owner consulting with an expert carpenter: he is defiled with sin, and proud, and wicked. He sets the whole mess of his spiritual state, as he sees it, into her lovely powerful hands. "Take my heart, and change it," he requests, then, coaxing, beguiling, as any lover, "Show the world what thou canst do for those who love thee!" See how the emphasis rests on 'thee,' not 'me'. This is the secret of the saints, the mark of the true lover.

There isn't an instinct of the saints which we haven't had at one time or another. In them it grows to something fine. St. Teresa dearly loved to please people, but she had early hold of the proper progression, thus: To please yourself is unimportant, pleasing others is better, and, to please God, best of all. Her pyramid of character stayed fast because she had the sense to base it on the stone of greatest weight, God, nor spent her life in futile attempt to balance it on the least tip, her eager self. Such fundamental sanity has its own charm.

Some inkling of it is penetrating our consciousness very slowly. All too recently have come the books reminding us that saints are people. There is illuminating contrast between the dusty chronicles which sounded the stern refrain that saints are very, very holy, and not like us, and the glowing writings of the saints themselves. Those fervent spirits speak out their love so ardently as to make the grand passions of the world seem mediocre and spineless.

Most recently of all, some Catholic writers have based their stories on the sound premise that children will find their saints more vivid, and easier to imitate if they seem more like themselves. Granted, that many saints found early expression of their genius of love; some did not, and had to grow up to it.

It is a fine thing that children should know of a loving little negro boy walking dirty city streets, and that a good little girl liked to go fishing with her father, and was rained on. These children can be identified with themselves, better than the bright spirits on the holy cards.

The brave and holy adventurers of the spirit should crowd the shelves where sit the notable (and sometimes the notorious) of the world; we must know them if they are to be our allies.

It is all too often, even now, that a saint, looking ruefully down from his painted pedestal, is called forth only because someone has put out a novena leaflet about him, and someone else is so far in need as to "try him out."

But how stupid the approach! With only half a heart and half a hope, we do all the talking, with never a thought for a saintly wish, as if our desires are all-important, and most trivial it is that the saint might like to further in us, even a little, the work to which he gave his heart on earth.

He may be deserted in the middle of the nine days' petition by those of little faith; or he may make a constant devotee, who feels a trifle miffed at later silences; or a recipient, startled and grateful, who shamefacedly tells his friends of his good luck and then subsides until his next great need. Sometimes the prayerful one notes acidly that his request was granted with reservations, or accompanying unpleasant conditions, which, if intended for the good of his soul, are intrusive of his satisfaction. Or nothing at all happens, and the petitioner's faith in all good things may diminish, just a little.

Any businessman knows the importance of his "contacts"; he is attentive and alert to further them, if he is any good at all. But what a casual, faintly skeptic manner we have for the high-hearted, extremely sensitive (for the things that are God's) people who are saints! How passing our contact with this influential friend who waits in the place, if we may call Heaven so, where we will do our most important living!

Stubbornly, we ask for the myriad things which, we think, will increase our happiness on earth. We ask it of the very men and women who made up their minds that happiness here was unimportant, compared to the world of tomorrow; that it might even endanger the blessedness of that other, better time. If silent saints should speak, how gently might they say, as her lady did to Bernadette, "I cannot promise to make you happy in this world, only in the next."

Our petitions admit, a little grudgingly, the proviso "if it be God's will." So small a part, for that Will which the saints sought unceasingly, with whose mysterious workings they long to move the world!

On earth it is a common thing to forget people who are not useful or at least pleasing to us. But how prodigal we are, tossing away the treasure offered by our would-be heavenly friends! We keep them safe at the border-line of acquaintanceship, and return to them as tools, rather than vital companions. That the saints should be forgotten men and women!

The Irony of Divine Justice *

Josefa Maria Mockenhaupt

IT WAS a beautiful summer morning. Three of us had been traveling for a week through the Mosel Valley. We had received many beautiful impressions, but we were certainly not anticipating the remembrance that this last day of the trip would add to the others.

The first streaks of dawn were just appearing in the eastern sky, when distant church bells sounded their call to Divine worship. At first only rarely but after a while in ever-growing numbers people began to pass us on the road. Some were in autos, others were on bicycles, all were in their best clothes. On and on we trudged past ancient homes and romantic churches, past steeples and walls of fortresses, past roadside shrines and milestones. We passed through several villages in an effort to reach the church in the town of Z—. About nine o'clock I stopped to ask an old lady seated on a bench at the edge of a village through which we had walked how far we were still to go. "Gruess Gott, lady, how far is it to the town of Z—" "About half an hour's walk," she replied. "But you are

still young and can make it quicker than that." She inquired if we were going to Mass there, and informed us that the Mass would be at ten o'clock. We could easily make it.

However, when the half hour passed we saw no sign of Z—. We began to wonder if we had gone in the right direction, but we trusted the old lady completely. We walked on a little further and just as we heard a clock faintly striking ten times, we saw the steeple in the town. With a little hurrying on our part we could still arrive there in time for the Mass.

We came into the church just as the priest was mounting his quaint little pulpit. The congregation was surprisingly silent. One could almost hear the breathing of the peasants. He spoke eloquently of the spirit of love, of our good fortune in being children of God, of avenging justice, of the Lord's grace of pardon and His patience and mercy. His speech was that of a priest filled with enthusiasm for the love of God. I cannot recall all the sermon but I can put down the sense of it as I recall it.

The Sermon

A number of years previous to the First World War, according to this priest, three students from the same vicinity sat in the room of their boarding house. They had finished their studies creditably and had decided to celebrate their success with a wild party. Each had to furnish his portion of liquor and much of the time was spent in cards and gambling. Even this proved rather tame for such an event and they began to look for something more daring. It was decided that each was to make some suggestion.

The eldest jubilantly sprang to his feet and with a joyful "I have it" on his lips hurried to his locker and returned with a revolver. "As my choice I suggest we have target practice." All agreed that this would be great sport, but what could they use as a target in the house?

The same leader also took care of that. He re-

moved a crucifix from the bedroom and hung it on one wall of the room. "Here," he said, "we will not only have the fun of seeing this target shattered, but we can watch the landlady when she sees with horror what we have done." All laughed at the blasphemous suggestion and thought it a good one.

Peter, the eldest, offered to try to shoot off the head of the corpus, Hans was to shoot off the hands, and Klaus would shoot off the feet. Peter stepped back four paces, took aim, fired, and the head of the beautiful crucifix was broken into many pieces. Vulgar shouting and laughter applauded the shot. Hans took two shots in rapid succession and the arms of Christ fell to the floor in fragments, filling the room with dust and fumes.

Klaus, noting the terrible condition of the crucifix lost all interest in the game. He shuddered when the revolver was handed to him. At first the others stared at him with open mouths; they then broke out in impious laughter. "Behold the chicken-hearted little sonny boy. What a model for the girls' high school. What a prayer-boy, a—" The last word had not been added before the feet of the crucifix lay with the rest of the shattered pieces.

* This story appeared in *Nord Amerika*, a German language paper printed in the interests of St. Vincent's Orphanage in Tacony, Philadelphia, Pa., in the issue of September 23, 1943. The translation was made by F. J. Dietz, of Baltimore, Maryland.

Casting the revolver from him he rushed out of the room and away from the taunts of his two companions.

Klaus ran into the all merciful arms of God and became a serious-minded person. Eventually he turned to the study of theology with the desire to become a priest. Five years later the young theological student was still plagued by the memory of having fired on a crucifix. He tried to console himself without avail. The painful scenes followed him relentlessly.

The World War broke out. Klaus, the young priest, volunteered for the armed service, hoping thereby to have an opportunity for atonement. He served two years on the battlefield as chaplain. Frequently he crawled among the bleeding and wounded to give the dying the benefit of his "Ego te absolvo" and to console them in their dying moments.

A heated day of battle in the summer of 1916 was followed by a restful evening. As the night advanced the chaplain sat with his companions in a dugout. No one thought of sleep because of unstrung nerves. Suddenly a renewed and unexpected drum fire broke out. Bullets flew, machine guns chattered, bombs burst, and flares illuminated the darkness bringing a night of horror. During a temporary silence, the young priest crawled among the wounded. He knelt beside a badly wounded soldier

when he suddenly felt a terrible pain in his foot. The young priest collapsed and could not struggle to his feet again. He felt his blood rising in his boot and realized that he had been struck by a piece of shrapnel which had torn his muscles.

He was brought to a field hospital where it was at first thought that an amputation would be necessary. Thanks to the skill of the surgeon, however, the foot was saved, but recovery was slow and painful. Finally the young priest was released from further duty and returned home. Here he inquired about the two friends of his youth. Both had volunteered for the armed forces. Reports from the front were that Peter F. had received a head wound killing him instantly. This had occurred about six months before. Hans L. had been found bled to death with both arms shot off. These were frightful reports for the young priest.

The priest in the pulpit stood silent for a moment but continued after a pause: "The lightminded student of years ago who later became a priest, then an army chaplain, my friends, stands here now before you." Minutes of silence followed. All were vividly impressed with the last remarks of the preacher. The congregation was amazed.

I noticed as the priest left the pulpit he limped slightly to the altar and all through the rest of the Mass I was aware of the difficulty he had in walking from place to place.

OUR MANNERS IN CHURCH

(Continued from page 356)

individualism and private interpretation enter into the rendering of the chant, that simplicity and unity give way to a variety of private solos which please neither God nor man.

Where hymns in the vernacular are sung at such services as Benediction and Novena Devotions, care should be taken to select only such hymns as are consonant with good taste and are approved by the Diocesan Committee on Church Music. Sentimental love songs are entirely out of place in church. At weddings and funerals these abuses are dying the hardest kind of death. Anyone worthy of being choir director or organist in a church should have sufficient character to insist on banning the unfit from the choir loft. (A series of three articles on

Church Music will be carried in THE GRAIL, beginning with the December issue. This history of the Church's music and hymnody may assist the choir master in convincing those who insist on ditties and jingles during the Offertory and Communion.)

What the choir is to the parish in singing, that the Mass servers sometimes are in the matter of praying. Those who instruct them will insist on moderately slow and devotional responses. Boys are wont to vie with one another in racing through the Confiteor and other prayers, in dashing from one side of the altar to the other with the Missal, and in giving the altar bell a blow or a shake that will resound for the duration. Their tender years will suggest the best remedies for these distractions.

Echoes from OUR ABBEY HALLS

THE customary fall ordinations took place this year on September 23 and 24. On the morning of the 23rd Bishop Ritter conferred the Minor Orders of Porter and Reader on Messrs. Bronislau Rusteika and Albert Zimmerman, and the Subdiaconate on Messrs. Cornelius Bergan, Elmer Boyden, Charles Muller, Eugene Quinn, and Brothers Louis Blume, S.M., Bertrand Clemens, S.M., Francis Gerber, S.M., Bernard Horst, S.M., Charles O'Neill, S.M., Paul Ryan, S.M., George Scherrer, S.M., and James Young, S.M. On the following day Mr. Albert Haag joined Messrs. Bronislau Rusteika and Albert Zimmerman in the reception of the Minor Orders of Exorcist and Acolyte. The twelve Subdeacons of one day were joined by another twelve, who had received the Subdiaconate last June, to make up a class of twenty-four to be elevated to the Diaconate on the morning of the 24th, thus bringing our total number of deacons to thirty-five. Three seminarians and eight Benedictine Fraters have been deacons since last June. Those receiving only the Diaconate at this time were the Rev. Messrs. Charles Buscher, Leonard Goewert, Francis Hannifin, Donald Hardebeck, George Lanning, Richard Puetz, Vincent Ryan, Glennon Sims, Ernest Willett, and Fraters John Nedley, Cong. Orat., Joseph Richmond, Cong. Orat., and Edward Wahl, Cong. Orat. With so many Deacons at hand now we are never at a loss to find ministers for our more solemn liturgical functions.

Late September and early October brought busy days to St. Meinrad. From September 30th to October 3rd the Abbey was host to the Abbots of the Swiss-American Congregation of the Order of St. Benedict assembled here for their Twentieth General Chapter. The Solemn Pontifical Mass opening the Chapter was sung on Saturday by Father

Abbot Thomas Meier, O.S.B., of St. Benedict's Abbey (Oregon). Present in the sanctuary were the other four Abbots of the Congregation, Father Abbot Columban Thuis, O.S.B., of St. Joseph's Abbey (Louisiana), who is Praeses or President of the Congregation, our own Father Abbot Ignatius Esser, O.S.B., who serves as the Congregation's Vice President, Father Abbot Stephen Schappler, O.S.B., of Conception Abbey (Missouri), and Father Abbot Paul Nahlen, O.S.B., of New Subiaco Abbey (Arkansas). For us it was a distinct pleasure to have all these visiting Abbots with us, and their presence served as a fine reminder of the bonds which link the various Swiss-American Abbeys. New Subiaco Abbey and St. Joseph's Abbey are daughter houses of St. Meinrad's Abbey, the former having been started from St. Meinrad in 1878, and the latter in 1889. Moreover, Father Abbot Columban is a former member of our own community, while Father Abbot Stephen spent several years at St. Meinrad as a cleric preparing for the priesthood. We hope all enjoyed being with us as much as we enjoyed having them with us.

The work of the General Chapter was completed in seven sessions in which points of policy and discipline were discussed and legislation was drawn up affecting all the Abbeys of the Congregation. On Monday, October 3rd, the Chapter concluded with a Pontifical High Mass offered by the Rt. Rev. President, Columban Thuis, O.S.B., in honor of the Immaculate Conception, Patroness of the Congregation. After the Gospel of the Mass Father William Walker, O.S.B., the Secretary of the Chapter, read a summary of the Acts and Decrees to the assembled community, and at the end of the Mass the monks and students sang the "Te Deum" in thanksgiving for the success of the General Chapter.

On the very day that the General Chapter came to a close another group of persons gathered at the Abbey for a meeting. This time it was the members of the Liturgical Conference. One hundred and two persons made up the number of visiting liturgists in attendance at the sessions held on October 3-6. Of this group, fifty-one were priests and religious, thirty-eight Sisters from various religious orders, and thirteen lay persons. During the business sessions held on these days the Constitution and By-Laws of the National Liturgical Conference were discussed and voted upon. And on the final day the election of Executive Officers took place. Rt. Rev. Msgr. Joseph P. Morrison, of Chicago, was elected President; the Rev. Joseph F. Stedman, of Brooklyn, N. Y., Vice-President; Very Rev. Msgr. Reynold Hillenbrand, Treasurer, and the Rev. Michael Ducey, O.S.B., Secretary.

While at St. Meinrad the visitors attended the daily Conventual High Mass, Vespers, and Compline in the Abbey Church. For the students, classes went on as usual. Each evening papers were read on liturgical subjects. Father Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B., of St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn., spoke on "Liturgy and Orthodox Belief." "The Psalms in Catholic Life" was the subject covered by our own Father William Walker, O.S.B. The paper of Father Damasus Winzen, O.S.B., of Keyport, N. J., dealt with "Liturgy and the Word of God," while that of Father Rembert Sorg, O.S.B., of Fifield, Wis., discussed "The Language of the Roman Liturgy." A survey entitled "Restoration of the Parish High Mass" was presented by Father Ermin Vitry, O.S.B., of O'Fallon, Mo. The whole meeting was brought to a close by the Solemn High Mass and "Te Deum" on the morning of October 6.

De Profundis

Jerome Palmer, O.S.B.

From the depths of God's great furnace

Comes a call that must concern us,
'Tis the call of souls in pain.

Pitiful it is to hear them,
With but one bright thought to cheer them—

They are sure of God's domain.

Listen to their plaintive moaning,
Voices weeping, sobbing, groaning,
Wailing spirits sore distressed.

Hear the howling wind so mournful
Shriek in accents almost scornful,
"Why not help those souls oppressed?"

"You, at least," they say, "who love us,

Give us help in His sweet name.
Harken to the sobs that reach you,
Heed the lessons that we teach you
From these realms of purging flame.

"Ye who live in worldly splendor,
Know that wealth is no defender
'Gainst the justice of a God.
Ye who shun all human sorrow,
Who can say but that tomorrow,
You shall lie beneath the sod?

"Ye who long for this earth's glitter,
Know that fiery pangs are bitter,
Bitter far beyond your ken.
All the wealth amassed in ages
Cannot check the fire which rages,
Feeding on the sins of men.

"Leaping flames torment and grieve us,
There is no one to relieve us
From this pool of cleansing fire.
We depend on man to aid us,
For the patient God who made us
Looks upon us now with ire.

"When on earth He heard us sighing,
Saw us fearful, trembling, dying,
He was merciful to us.
He forgave us all offenses,
All our sins of heart and senses,
Sins and crimes most numerous.

"But we've taken our departure
For this land of pain and torture,
Where our agony begins.
For His mercy here lies dormant,
Justice rules this place of torment,
Wreaking vengeance for our sins."

Heartless man, have you no feeling,
For the souls you hear appealing?
Can it be, you do not care?
Listen to them pleading, pleading,
To those tortured souls still pleading,
Pleading for a little prayer!

Children, do you hear them crying?
Do you hear their weary sighing?
All day long they wait and weep.
Your indifference dismays them,
And your negligence delays them,
Holds them in that fiery deep.

Ye who've passed to age unheeding,
Now, I pray ye, hear them pleading,
Pleading for the prayers of men.
Do not wait until tomorrow,
Lest perhaps with poignant sorrow
You yourself be pleading then!



LITTLE QUEEN

Mary Fabyan Windeatt

CHAPTER EIGHT

LATER in the day I felt a little better, for by now I had remembered something very important. A short time before our audience with the Holy Father, I had abandoned myself to the Will of God in a new way. I had told our Lord that He was to think of me as a little toy, a ball, with which He could play whenever He wished. If He held me to His Heart, well and good. I would glory in the great privilege. But if He threw me to the floor, left me in a corner, even pierced me through and through, I would not complain. I was His very own, and existed only to serve Him and to give Him pleasure.

"I am our Lord's plaything until I die," I told myself. "I must never forget it."

Our pilgrimage was drawing to a close. After visits to Naples and Pompeii, we set out for the north of Italy where we stopped briefly at Assisi, Florence, Pisa and Genoa. Then came the return to France. This time our route lay along the Mediterranean, past pretty little villages and later through plains covered with orange trees, olives and graceful palms. After stops at Marseilles and Lyons, we finally arrived in Paris. The pilgrimage was over at last.

"Wouldn't you like to go on another trip?" Papa asked me, as the train speeded us toward Lisieux and home. "This one could be to the Holy Land, Therese. You would have a wonderful time."

I smiled, then shook my head. Papa was a born traveler. He loved seeing strange places, meeting new friends. As for me, all I desired was to be a Carmelite. I wanted to begin my life's work of saving souls through prayer and sacrifice. And although there seemed no chance that I could do this right away, I still had hopes. Perhaps the Bishop had changed his mind during our month's absence from Lisieux. Perhaps a letter would be waiting for me when I reached home, giving me permission to enter Carmel on Christmas Day.

Alas! There was no letter from the Bishop when we arrived at *Les Buissonnets*. A hurried visit to Carmel, where I spoke with Marie, Pauline, and



One day, on his return from a walk in the country, he brought me an unusual present.

Mother Mary Gonzaga, the Prioress, gave me little encouragement. No girl my age had ever entered the Carmel of Lisieux. Apparently no girl my age ever would.

"Don't be discouraged," said Pauline kindly. "Everything is going to be all right."

I nodded, grateful that my "Little Mother" understood how I was suffering. It was not for nothing that I had offered myself to our Lord to be His little ball. He had taken me at my word, and for the time being had dropped me in the corner.

Four weeks later came the news I had longed for so earnestly. On January 1, 1888, the day before my fifteenth birthday, Mother Mary Gonzaga sent word that the Bishop now authorized her to receive me as a postulant. My heart filled with joy as I read the welcome words, and I was ready to fly away to the monastery that very minute. However, there was more to the letter than the news of the Bishop's permission. It seemed that Mother Mary Gonzaga did not wish me to come to Carmel until after Lent. She did not think a girl of fifteen should enter the cloister in this season of extra hardship and prayer.

"And she's right," declared Celine emphatically, seeing how my eyes filled with sudden tears at still another delay. "You know she is, Therese."

I hid my disappointment as well as I could, al-

though April 9, the date set for my entrance, seemed very far away. How could I settle down to life in the world when every part of me ached for the prayerful silence of the cloister? Papa understood, and so did Celine, and both did all they could to make my last weeks at home happy ones. Leonie was a little worried, however. Some months before she had left us to become a Poor Clare, but the life had been too hard and now she was home again.

"You must pray a good deal about your vocation," she told me. "Life in the cloister demands more sacrifice than you think, Therese. I know this from experience."

I appreciated Leonie's anxiety, and told her that every day I was praying for grace and strength to be a good religious. I was not entering Carmel merely to escape the trials and temptations of life in the world, to enjoy companionship with Marie and Pauline. I really wanted to save souls. I really wanted to give my life, in union with Christ, for the redemption of sinners.

Slowly the weeks passed. I spent a great deal of time with Papa, for my heart ached at the thought of parting with him. He was almost sixty-five years old, and not too well. It would be a great sacrifice for me to leave him in April. Somehow he seemed to read such thoughts, and did everything to comfort me. One day, on his return from a walk in the country, he brought me an unusual present. It was a tiny white lamb, just one day old. Celine and I were delighted with the little creature and gave it every attention. But our new pet died the same day Papa gave it to us. I was deeply touched, sensing that the lamb's death had a real lesson for me. Some days later I wrote to Marie:

"We should not become attached to anything on this earth, not even to things most innocent, for they fail us at the moment we least think. Only the eternal can fully content us."

On the evening of April 8, there was a farewell dinner at *Les Buissonnets*. Papa, Celine and Leonie were present, as well as Uncle Isidore, Aunt Celine and our two cousins, Jane and Marie. Everyone was very solemn which disturbed me not a little. Why should my dear ones be sad, I asked myself, when I was doing the very wonderful thing of giving myself to God?

The same state of affairs prevailed the next morning, when we assisted at Mass in the public chapel of the Carmelite monastery and received Holy Communion. There were tears and sobs on all sides. Even Papa could not control his emotion. The only one who remained calm was I, who so often had given myself to crying. Yet I was

troubled, too, now that the moment for my great adventure actually had come. As I walked toward the door of the cloister, my heart beat so violently that I wondered if I was going to die. What agony to say good-bye to Papa, to Celine and Leonie, to my other relatives and friends!

Presently the cloister door opened. I embraced my dear ones once more, then knelt for Papa's blessing. Still weeping, he knelt beside me and raised his hand in the Sign of the Cross. Then I arose and walked across the threshold to where Marie and Pauline, now Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart and Sister Agnes of Jesus, were waiting to greet me. My heart was filled to overflowing. I was in Carmel at last!

Yet there was one person who still looked upon my entrance with disapproval. This was Canon Delatroette, a worthy priest who supervised the affairs of the monastery. As the cloister door stood open, he looked at the little group of nuns gathered about me.

"Well, my Reverend Mothers, you can now chant a *Te Deum*," he announced grimly. "As the Bishop's delegate, I present to you this child of fifteen whose entrance you have desired. I trust she may not disappoint your hopes, but I remind you that if it should turn out otherwise, the responsibility will be yours alone."

A chill silence descended on us all. My heart ached for Papa, for I could see that the words of the Canon had struck him to the quick. Yet no one made any reply. After a few more farewells, the door was closed and I was led away. It was time to change my dress of pale blue wool for the black garb of a postulant.

From the beginning, everything about the monastery delighted me. The silence, the poverty, the chanting of the Divine Office, the plain little cell assigned to me, seemed more wonderful than the greatest riches on earth. I was truly happy, and not a day passed that I did not rejoice at God's goodness in giving me the vocation to be a Carmelite. I told myself that I was in the monastery forever. Only death could take me away.

Yet I did have troubles. On my entrance I had been assigned some household duties. For a little while each day I worked in the linen room with the sub-Prioress and Novice Mistress, Mother Mary of the Angels. I was also given a staircase and a dormitory to sweep. These were only light duties, but not being used to housework I did not always accomplish my tasks properly. One day the Prioress, Mother Mary Gonzaga, discovered a cobweb on the stairway. In the presence of the entire community she gave me a dreadful scolding.

"It's easy to see that our cloisters have been

swept by a child of fifteen," she said crossly. "Sister Therese, go and sweep away that cobweb and learn to be more careful in the future."

I was very embarrassed, also hurt, for never had the Prioress spoken to me in such fashion. In my previous visits with her in the parlor, she had always been kind and understanding. Now she was continually finding fault. Everything I did was wrong. To make matters worse, the Novice Mistress generally sent me to the garden every afternoon at half-past four to do some weeding and to get some exercise. On these little trips I never failed to meet Mother Mary Gonzaga. One day she stopped me, and as usual I could see she was angry.

"Child, you do absolutely nothing!" she exclaimed. "What kind of novice are you to have to be sent out every day for a walk?"

I said nothing. A good religious is not expected to make excuses for herself, even when she is in the right. But my heart was heavy many times because of the Prioress' treatment. She no longer seemed to like me. Every time we met I was scolded for being lazy, stupid, slow. Little did I realize that Mother Gonzaga was treating me thus in order to test my vocation, that she really loved me and was doing her best to make me lean upon God instead of upon creatures.

Sometimes Marie and Pauline were irritated with me, too. At recreation I did not come to sit beside them, but spent this free time with other nuns instead. I never confided in my big sisters as to how I liked being a Carmelite. In spite of themselves, they felt I had changed and no longer loved them as in our days together at home. I was a stranger, not the little girl who had run to them with one trouble after another. I knew what my dear ones were thinking, but did not change my ways. I felt I should not seek for any pleasure, even the most innocent, now that I had come to Carmel to save souls by prayer and sacrifice. That Marie and Pauline did not understand only made the sacrifice greater, and more pleasing to God.

The weeks passed, and I did my best to follow the Rule. I wanted so much to be a saint! Yet who was there to help and encourage me. Our Lord seemed to have gone far away. I found it very hard to pray, even at Mass or after Holy Communion. The chaplain and other priests who came to the monastery did not understand what was the matter with me, and when I told one of these, Father Blino, that I wanted to be a saint and to love God as Saint Teresa of Avila had loved Him, he was quite taken back.

"What pride and presumption!" he exclaimed. "Confine yourself to the correction of your faults; see that you offend the good God no more, make

some little progress each day, and moderate your rash desires."

I tried to make the good priest understand. "Father, I don't think my desires are rash. Didn't our Lord say: 'Be ye perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect?'"

But Father Blino was not convinced, repeating his former advice, and from then on I was more worried than ever about the state of my soul. Only the chance to speak to another priest, Father Pichon, set me at ease. I had known him before my entrance into Carmel, for he had been confessor to Marie and Pauline, also the only priest who had encouraged me to enter the monastery while still so young. After having heard a general confession of my life, Father Pichon told me to be of good heart for I was in the state of grace. Then he spoke these words:

"In the presence of God, of the Blessed Virgin, of all the angels and saints, I declare that you have never committed a single mortal sin. Render thanks to the Saviour Who has given you this grace without any merit on your part."

I was greatly consoled, and promised not to worry any more. There was help from another source, too—that of the reading I was required to do. I already loved one book very much. This was the *Imitation of Christ*, which I knew by heart. But now I began to make a thorough study of the writings of Saint Teresa of Avila and Saint John of the Cross. The Bible was given to me also, and I became so attached to the Gospels that when I discovered a volume containing all four, I asked permission to carry it with me always. It was a very tiny book, and so I was able to keep it next to my heart.

Since my entrance I had worn the black dress and cap of a postulant. As spring gave place to summer, I thrilled at the thought that soon I might exchange this garb for the holy habit of the Carmelite Order. I told myself that generally one remained a postulant for six months. Since I had entered the monastery in April, I would be eligible to become a novice in October—while I was still fifteen. But presently Mother Mary Gonzaga called me aside and said that my Clothing Day would not occur so soon.

"You will have to wait three extra months," she informed me.

There was no explanation for the delay, but something told me it was not because the Prioress doubted my vocation. No, there was another reason. Perhaps Canon Delatroette did not think I had been tried enough? Perhaps he still believed I had made a mistake in entering a cloistered Order at the age of fifteen

(To be continued)



Our Reading Room

OUR CHILDREN'S YEAR OF GRACE

By Therese Mueller

THIS very small, or pamphlet-like book has to do with the Liturgical seasons of the Church. It is divided under the headings: Advent Season, Christmas Season, Lenten Season, Paschal Season, and Time after Pentecost. There is a foreword by Monsignor Hellriegel stating: "The purpose of this small, but great book is to pave the way for a closer, holier and more vital union of the Home with Christ and His Church."

There is undoubtedly a field for this type of writing; or perhaps, better, a need for writing in this field. "Our Children's Year of Grace" will serve a purpose; but somehow, I think it defeats its own end. First of all, the book is entirely too small. Although it readily admits itself merely as an introduction, its brevity necessarily implies impenetrable obscurity. References to blessings of the Church are simply unintelligible unless one is thoroughly acquainted with the Ritual (and the complete Ritual, at that).

The illustrations seem to leave much to be desired. Any interpretation is admissible: presumably, the more liturgically minded, the greater variety possible. The cover illustration is made up of a semi-circle of sheaves of wheat, enclosing a table with cross bars for supports; on the table at either end is a pitcher and a dish stacked high with loaves of bread, a Chi-Rho in the center and not resting on the table. Confidentially, my imagination might have erred in naming and describing this picture. There is no accompanying explanation. Your interpretation is as good as mine. Advent is depicted, but, well, I rather miss the

shepherds, and the choir of Angels. After all, you know, the Gospel account puts them in the picture. The Lenten Season shows two sticks crossed with a palm-like flame ascending with "Miserere" on one side and "Exaltabo" on the other. The Paschal Season has for its introductory picture three intertwining circles with a cross in one, chalice and host in another and a candle, lighted, in center. To me, there's just nothing about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead in that illustration. The illustration for Time After Pentecost is more elaborate and involved: a lamb in green, water from lamb's breast gushing into a chalice, topped by a host, the Alpha and Omega on either side of the lamb, lamb has a collar around the neck, the lamb is topped by three intertwining circles, head of lamb in one, hand in middle, and dove in third. The meaning of this one is comparatively obvious to the well initiated, I trust. We know the Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles in the form of fiery tongues. Why not leave it at that? Surely our traditional pictures are not entirely lacking in beauty, nor theologically meaningless. Again, this booklet was meant to introduce the Liturgical Life to those not too well informed. Why make an obscure thing the more hidden?

The book is too small for all that it wishes to embrace. Let the writing of the Epiphany suffice (incidentally, this feast would allow for a beautiful illustration). The author speaks of the symbolic gifts of the magi. These gifts do have a varied symbolism, but Saint Matthew tells us clearly the wise men "opening their treasures, they offered him gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh."

Reference is made to the Epiphany blessings of chalk, gold and frankincense (the gold to be offered for vessels for the altar—while this is beautiful, and believe me no irreverence is intended, I think it a bit naive), etc. If these blessings are to be mentioned, I think they should be given a complete explanation: history, prayers, etc. Then, too, if one wants to go into this why not be complete? There's a perfectly beautiful blessing of water on the eve of the Epiphany, including the Litany of the Saints and the Te Deum. The theological importance of Epiphany somehow isn't felt. Or, better, the Theology of the Epiphany is not sufficiently clear. Epiphany is a humanly beautiful and delightful feast; Liturgically important; theologically meaningful. But the author, to my mind, just doesn't "put it across."

That seems to be pretty much the trouble with the whole booklet. I can see the point of the author. I think she has liturgically finer sensibilities. She unquestionably loves the Liturgy. But I can't imagine any mother, busy with household cares, raising a family, doing the washing (people still do these things in spite of advertisements) using this booklet as a means of instruction for her children. The poor mother would need several source books to explain the explanations.

I say this with deep regret. I think there might well be written a series of small books—not too small, either, covering the various seasons, feasts, Sundays, ceremonies of the Church. And let this series be complete; simply written, authoritative, and well illustrated, so that the mother can actually point to the baby Jesus in the crib, without getting

lost herself in a too difficult and symbolic drawing. I'd like to see such publications as attractive and cheap as the fairy tales. Why not a reading from the book on the Liturgical life of the Church instead of Jack and the Bean Stalk?

THE REST OF YOUR LIFE

By Leo Cherne

This book presents a picture of America after the war. I suppose it might well be called a book of post-war economics. It's an intensely interesting book, actually fascinating. The author is undoubtedly prepared well for its writing since he is the executive secretary of the Research Institute of America. I'm of the opinion everyone should read some such book as this. It is well and advisable, if not necessary, to be informed on what is happening and will happen. The book is not too long, just short of three hundred pages; excellently written; well bound; and printed in comparatively large type. The book entails everything from the time the boys come marching home to the day when you will commute from your country estate to your office in your own plane.

The book is divided into four major sections: 1) War's End; 2) The Future of Your Job; 3) The Future of America's Classes; 4) Your Life Tomorrow.

The author is not too optimistic about the soldiers' return home, i.e., the soldiers' easy return to civilian and peace time living. He gives a number of contradictions, or contradictory reactions, on arriving home: "For years he will have griped about Army pay. Only with the peace will he realize that Army pay provided a security that no longer exists... the lowest paid Army private receives \$1700 a year: cash income \$50.00 a month, \$600.00; food, \$574.40; shelter, \$120.00; equipment, \$170.00; medical care, \$100.00; saved on life insurance, \$63.40; saved on cigarettes, \$10.95; saved on laundry, \$32.50; saved on postage and barber services, \$28.65. He'll look back with nostalgia at the seven cents he paid for American cigarettes overseas. He'll recall the protection he received against civil liabilities

such as income tax, lawsuits, insurance premium payments, instalments on the mortgage. Now they will be doubly annoying since they were only suspended until six months after the war and the indebtedness will have accumulated. Reality will begin to close in. The last fling will not end with the war. Many of the boys will feel a great urge for an escape from reality, an escape from routine. Psychologists say that the veterans of this war will cling to the ideals of individual initiative, endurance, self-reliance, and courage. But tortured by their insecurity, they will have an exaggerated desire for someone to lean on.... He (G.I. Joe) wants like all hell to come home. When he finally does come home he'll find that everyone walks too slow."

Concerning employment of the returned soldiers, the author presents this picture: "But the valuable drilling that will be performed by all these separate mechanisms will finally run up against bed-rock: How many jobs will there be? All of the demobilization efforts will be directed toward ferreting out the last possible job and putting Joe on the receiving end of a pay check. But none of the job-placement efforts can make jobs that aren't there. No more than you can get water from the fanciest faucets in your washbasin, if the reservoir is empty. We had better look at the reservoir." Not too happy a description of the employment situation after the war.

In part two of the book, the author discusses employment. "It all boils down to the one word that has already plagued us on most of the preceding pages—employment. For two years the physical resources of the nation have provided jobs for just about everybody interested in holding one, competent or not. Capitalism plus war has given full employment. Reconversion will determine whether Capitalism without war will give full employment."

It is with reluctance that I quote the last part of this section of the book. But, even if the author is wrong, and I hope he is, we should be prepared, at least mentally, for possible hard days ahead. Assum-

ing the end of the war in Europe in late 1944 and in Asia by mid-1946, the following seems likely: at the close of 1944 several millions of the formerly employed will already be listed as employment liabilities. Decisive legislative action and government policy for 1945 seems improbable. The desire to run away... will add up to delay, confusion, and little more than isolated inadequate action. The inevitable crisis will begin to threaten when the last months of 1945 find the ranks of the unemployed multiplied to perhaps ten million. After the crisis the economy will rest on the base of private enterprise but it will have accepted the government as an ally in producing employment." The author discusses at length the grave problems of employment, or unemployment, and labor unions, comparing them in the light of their history in Europe. I regret he does not discuss (may I mention it?) the genuine difficulty that will augment the problems of employment—the negro.

In part three the author discusses the middle classes. "The economic prophets have doomed the middle class. If they are right, America is doomed. The nation's future is the future of those groups who are the numerical majority in America, those groups who think and act for America. It is the future of the aspirations and identifications that have shaped the American culture, that have dominated its political life, have determined its origin, course, and direction... The significance for the future is plain. Both the unorganized salaried workers and the fixed-income groups in the community will start their postwar living on a weaker economic base. Their savings will be proportionately smaller, if at all existent; their margin for protection against disaster, weak; but their role and place is secure in the industrial community, secure except against the hazards of nationwide depression."

In part four of this book the author discusses your home, medicine, transportation, etc. He warns us against expecting those marvels of science and plastics, refrigerators

and bathtubs, automobiles and planes, as so attractively pictured in the magazine advertisements. It will all come—in time. It will all come—at a price. I should like to quote the concluding lines of this book: "America approaches the future with a physical and material strength unmatched by any country. It enters tomorrow with the resources of mind and science ready to be expanding life. America proceeds into the future with more than a measure of respect and friendship from the world's great and exhausted powers. America will hit the shoals of unemployment and free itself. It will rub along the reefs of depression and then reach new levels of production. It will run afoul of the weeds of native fascism, spawned in the morass of retreat, frustration, and fear." "That we are in for a conflict is to the good," says philosopher Charles Morris, "for tension is necessary to the greatest achievements. Stalemated tension, however, engenders frustration and anxiety, while integrated tension unlocks creative achievement. A frustrated, anxious, and neurotic America is one possibility; a liberated, expansive, confident America is the other. To prevent the former and to achieve the latter is your responsibility." "You start the rest of your life with no real enemies—except you!"

That's the picture the author gives us. The way is hard. The road is steep. The going will not be easy. But America has the natural resources, and surely her people the hardihood to forge ahead. And last, let us hope God will give the grace to the nation not to be overwhelmed by the adversities, but to bear the burdens and, humbly, to be grateful and triumphant.

There's just one last word in this matter, I should like to add, if I may. We are living in the age of the great accomplishments of science and machine. It's terrific: the speed of transportation, communication, etc. It's something to marvel at and rejoice in and to use. But it is all so frighteningly materialistic. Surely man will have to become the more spiritual to live with it all. To be

able to endure it. There is and will be vast wealth on the one hand and almost destitution on the other. Magnificent homes and slums. Surely, somehow there will be struck a golden middle way.

LEBANON

By Caroline Miller

A short novel of something over two hundred pages. Readable print and nicely bound. It is a book of no consequence either in story element or language.

Lebanon is the heroine of the story, which opens in the lowlands of Georgia. She had lived the simple life of nature in the woods with her father and brother. She falls in love with a Sebastian Ratcliff, who is already engaged to a Lucie Birdsong. Lebanon Fairgale, seeing the futility of her first love, marries a none too provident man, Fernald d'Aussy.

Fernald and Lebanon go West. A child is born to them. Fernald and the child die from the so-called Pest. Lebanon lives on in the home, despised and misunderstood by her neighbors. She is brought to trial for murder due to the accidental death of a neighbor—in a fight he leaned against a knife she was holding. She is cleared of this charge and marries a preacher named, Jairus Mountjoy.

While there's nothing particularly obscene about the book, on the whole there's nothing very edifying. Fernald is a bit of a rounder; and some of the neighbors' morals, to put it mildly, are dubious. Lebanon is described as a strong character but lacks the spiritual qualities that give greatness. The author fails to make Lebanon really admirable.

SIMONE

By Lion Feuchtwanger

A comparatively short, just over two hundred pages, novel on the German occupation of France. Attractively printed and bound. Of no importance.

Simone is a girl in her early teens. She lives with her aunt and uncle in the dual capacity of niece and servant. The uncle is in the trucking business and would willing-

ly collaborate with the Germans in transferring his trucks and gasoline supplies to them for their use against France. Simone sets fire to the whole establishment. Simone is prevailed upon to state that she does this not as a move against the Germans but out of personal spite against her aunt and uncle. For this she is sent to the reformatory.

There's an attempt at grandeur by the author's inserting references to Joan of Arc. This is accomplished by having Simone read aloud into the pages of the book. But it just doesn't ring true. There's nothing about Simone that approaches the heroism of a Joan. In fact that's the trouble with the book—there's nothing heroic about the heroine. Then too, the book doesn't inspire one with any great love for the glory of France that was. This is attempted, but just doesn't register.

The book may be classed as just another war story with attempt at demonstrating idealism. I believe the saturation point of such stories is reached. However, there's nothing objectionable about the book.

CRAZY WEATHER

By Charles L. McNichols

I was genuinely disappointed when I read this book. I had hoped it would be a delightful piece of juvenile fiction. But there's no appeal to adults and there's enough vulgarity to make one hesitate to recommend it to youngsters. There might be this point to the book, however, in all fairness to the author, the description of Indian habits and mode of life.

The title is derived from the atmospheric conditions that prevail in the valley of the Colorado River in summer. It is the story of two boys, named South Boy, and a full Indian one half white and half Indian named, Havek, who travel through the countryside visiting various settlements. It's pretty dull; and the reading is not helped any by the attempts at English as spoken by these boys. The story ends with South Boy going home and assuming his place on the ranch with his parents.

It's really pretty dull and tedious reading.

Fragrant Sand of Rose Ferron's Grave

O. A. Boyer, S.T.L.

Excerpts of letters testifying to the fragrance of the sand of Little Rose's grave.

TOWARDS the end of November, 1943, Mr. J. B. Ferron answered my request by sending me a small box of sand taken from Rose's grave. As the box was full to capacity, I took some, placed it into a small container and stored it away for myself. The box remained on my desk for about two weeks before it was sent to Miss Betty Kelly, for whom it was intended. During that time I handled the box more than once without noticing anything unusual. It was dirt when I received it and remained plain dirt until I sent it to Baltimore. On December 27, 1943, I received the following letter from Miss Kelly:

"I think I acknowledged the sand which you sent me from Rose's grave; but here is a little story in this connection which I did not mention. When the sand arrived, I poured some on a paper preparatory to putting it into a small container. The room was filled with the most heavenly perfume, but I did not mention this to you at the time, because I felt that you might think it was my imagination, since I have been typing your reports on the rose phenomena. I was doing this work in my bedroom where I have my desk and there were no natural flowers on my altar. Any perfumes or powders which I have are kept in the next room which I use as a dressing room, so that there was nothing in the room which could have caused this scent. This occurred sometime during the week of December 12th. I decided at the time, that if anyone who received the sand should report the fragrance, I would write and tell you about it."

"On Thursday, December 23, I sent a Christmas card with two pictures and some of the sand to Alice Reynolds, our Company Librarian. This was around 12:30 P.M. The



Mary Rose Ferron

envelope was placed in our Company mail, and around 2:00 P.M. I called Alice on the Company 'phone. During the conversation, the envelope was placed on her desk. I had said nothing about the sand or pictures, as they were to be a surprise, so I asked her to open the envelope and let me know if she liked what she found. I held the line, and then she came back with: 'Oh, Betty, what a wonderful fragrance from that sand!' I decided then that I should report this to you. Alice is a Mary-Rose devotee. I had not told her of my experience with the sand."

On January 11, 1944, Alice V. Reynolds writes: "I understand you want a report from me on the favor I received through Little Rose. On Thursday, Dec. 23, 1943, around 2:00 P.M. or 2:30 P.M. Miss Betty Kelly called me on our company telephone to tell me she had placed an envelope in the mail for me. While we were talking, the mailman delivered our mail and Miss Kelly's envelope which contained a Christmas greeting, two pictures which had been forwarded to me through her, and a little package of sand from the grave of Marie-Rose Ferron was placed on my desk. Immediately, I perceived the most heavenly scent of roses from this sand. I had a full view of my office and

could see no flowers anywhere in the room, but just to be sure, I told Miss Kelly to hold the line while I looked behind the small screen in the corner. I thought someone may have placed flowers there while I was at lunch, or that the envelope was scented.—This sand is still scented. I now have it in the drawer of my night table in my room and whenever I take it out, I can still get the heavenly fragrance. On the morning of the First Friday, the odor was very strong. This Christmas present coming directly from Little Rose in heaven, is the nicest I have ever received, and I hope I shall prove worthy of this wonderful favor.

April 10, 1944, Betty Kelly writes to Father Boyer: "Father Read is visiting you this week, so I am going to ask him to bring my box of scented sand so you can see for yourself. You will find it just as you sent it, in the box and in the brown wrapper. This sand has been near the window in my room most of the time, and I never keep my room heated. It has traveled in my brief case on very cold days, but you can see, it is just as strong as ever."

When the box arrived at Villa Pauline on April 13, 1944, Rev. Father Bruno Hagspiel, S.V.D., Rev. Walter Read, and Rev. Father Boyer, S.T.L., were present. When the box was unsealed, the sand was full of fragrance.

II

The fragrant sand comes to Villa Pauline

On January 9, 1944, I received the paper on which the sand of Rose's grave had been poured and which was still perfumed with the heavenly fragrance. Miss Kelly also added some sand and wrote: "I just poured out a little more sand and it was like pouring out of a bottle of perfume." The paper was more fragrant than the sand. I gave the

paper and the sand to the Superior of the Villa, so all the Sisters could witness this phenomenon. Later, upon my request, they gave me the following written testimony:—

"January 22, 1944—When Sister Gerardine brought the paper containing the sand from Little Rose's grave into our Community Room, she asked each Sister to smell it. We did this and each one of us detected a very fragrant odor emanating from the paper. Some of the Sisters seemed to smell a mixture of incense and perfume; others scented a strong odor of incense only. Frequently during the next few days, we scented the fragrant odor. Then one of the Sisters who had to undergo a serious operation took the paper and the sand which came from Miss Kelly with her to the hospital. A few days later, January 17, two of our Sisters visited her and on that occasion the odor was as strong as before." (Signed) Sisters of Christian Charity, Villa Pauline, per Sister Patricia.

One of these two Sisters mentioned above lived in the Motherhouse. She knew nothing of the odor. Her companion would not tell her for fear she would not scent the odor and if she did, she was anxious to see the reaction. When the paper was presented to her, this venerable old nun took in a deep breath and thought it was a delightful incense. She remembered that in Germany, in her younger days, her pastor used a similar brand on the principal feasts of the Church. When told what it was, the saintly old nun pressed the sand of Rose's grave to her lips. She would scent the fragrance and say, "Oh! Oh!" as if she had no words to express her veneration and joy.

That evening, on January 9, 1944, I examined the sand which I had kept. There was an odor; but it was so faint, that I preferred to ignore it rather than be accused of wishful thinking. It was nothing compared with the odor of the sand given to Miss Kelly and in whose hands it had become fragrant. I called on the Sisters and had them smell it and watched the reaction. Some detected no odor, others did;

but to their surprise the scent became stronger when the box was shaken and all were able to get it. It seemed as if the sand went asleep and needed to be shaken up to awake and puff out its sweet aroma. The box was left with the Sisters.

While it was there the odor grew slowly. Some nuns visited the box several times a day and noticed the odor would vary in strength and would disappear completely to return later. The nuns all enjoyed the fragrance. One of them, Sister Colletina, thought Mother Teresilla, the Provincial Superior of the Community, should share in this pleasure. Unbeknown to others, she reverently concealed the box under her arm and hurried to the Motherhouse. To her great surprise and confusion, the Superior smelled only dirt and

To Little Rose

*Little Rose, thou chosen mirror
Of our Savior's Holy Face,
Crowned with thorns and sorely
wounded,
Victim in the sinner's place;
Intercede for us, who love thee
Near to Jesus as thou art;
Ask for grace and light and healing
From the treasures of His Heart.*

—Sister of Charity

because of this failure, she was so ashamed of herself that she hurried back with her confusion and her box. Meanwhile she wondered why Mother could not get the fragrance, when the least nun of the Villa had received that favor. All these things she kept in her heart and would tell no one about them until she had witnessed the following event.

III

The sand of Rose's grave yields a sweet perfume in the hands of Mother Teresilla, the Provincial Superior of the Sisters of Christian Charity.

On January 22, 1944, at 5 P.M., Mother Teresilla, the Provincial of

the Sisters of Christian Charity visited the Villa. Sister Veronia, her secretary, was with her. Before leaving for supper, I asked Mother if she had witnessed the aroma of Rose's grave. Her reply amounted to what I had experienced. To her, it was plain dirt and nothing but dirt. But when she was told that the sand was not always fragrant, that some nuns scented the sand several times a day and found that the odor was sometimes hardly perceptible, and at other times, the box was full of fragrance, "Try it again," I said to Mother, "maybe you have scented the sand at the wrong time."

I must confess, that I was not sure she would get the odor. None of us is sure to witness a miracle. The tone of my words betrayed the want of conviction and was reflected in Mother's countenance. There were doubts in her eyes and diffidence in her smile. On leaving for the dining room, I did not believe she would make a further attempt to get the fragrance of the sand.

The advice was promptly forgotten and my mind was set on my meal when a knock was heard. I looked up, the door opened and as Mother Teresilla came in she raised her voice and said with a heart bubbling over with joy, "Father, it's scenting! It's scenting!" She was radiant, "walking on air." And who would not when God condescends to work a miracle in your own hands. One could be elated for much less than that. She held the box before me which contained the scented sand of Rose's grave and the odor of which we both had refused to acknowledge. When the box was presented to me, I took in a deep breath. Never before have I smelled anything like it. It was not incense; but something better than that. I filled my lungs repeatedly with the sweet fragrance and tried to analyze the odors of which it was composed; but each odor overlapped the other so completely that one could not be distinguished from the other; it was a perfect blend which gave a fragrance that could not be improved.

After experiencing this marvelous phenomenon, the box was shaken to

increase the intensity of the odor. No sooner had the lid been removed than the dust arose from the box like smoke out of a censor and filled the room with a strong scented odor, not as delicate as the former, not as perfect; but more like the odor of a precious incense. All that one could do was to wonder at the presence of this marvel.

When supper was over, on my way back to my room, there was a great animation in the vestibule. The Sisters were overwhelmed with joy. They spoke all together of miracles on miracles. The atmosphere was filled with heavenly fragrance. They laughed and giggled like children or rather, as if they were inebriated with the Holy Spirit. Really, I felt that He was there amongst them when they greeted me with the words, "Father, another miracle!" The miracle referred to was that of Sister Veronia. This nun who never had the sense of olfaction, had scented the fragrance from the sand to the surprise of everybody, especially herself. Through God's condescension, we all had been sniffing and inhaling the heavenly aroma, while Sister Veronia could only look on and deplore her infirmity. In the past, she never missed the sense of smell, but on this occasion, she seemed to regret it immensely, for she was complaining, when urged to invoke Rose. While doing so, Mother Teresilla shook the box of sand and as the fragrance poured out, she said, "Rose, make her smell!" and while saying this, she presented the box to Sister Veronia. On inhaling, her sense of olfaction appeared for the first and only time in her life. This experience was not repeated, it could not be renewed. The favor was granted; she had scented the fragrance. And now, experiencing the divine presence and being filled with jubilation, she joined the chorus of praise, spoke with others of the miracle of Rose and made you feel that God was really amongst us.

The sand was then brought to the Motherhouse so all the Sisters could witness the fragrance. The results were interesting: to one, the odor was like cologne; to another, like roses; others felt it was more like

incense; but the greater number could not describe the odor—it was something unique which they had never scented before.

The box remained there for about three months. During that time, the odor diminished gradually. It became very faint and finally died out completely leaving plain dirt, and smelling only like dirt.

When the box was returned to Villa Pauline, "life was restored" to the sand. The fragrance appeared very weak in the beginning and grew daily but slowly. If you shook the box once or twice, the sand seemed to awake from sleep, yawn out a fragrant puff and drop into the former state. If you gave it a good shaking, it would take a new lease on life, give out more fragrance and remain long enough to be enjoyed. And then it would return to its dormant state.

Such is the condition of the sand which is preserved here at Villa Pauline; but the fragrant sand of Miss Betty Kelly is different; it has never lost its odor, and is as strong today as it ever was. The following occurrence is proof of it.

IV

The scented sand of Rose's grave comes to Villa Pauline and is witnessed by the former Provincial Superior of the Society of the Divine Word, Rev. Bruno Hagspiel, S.V.D.

There was a retreat at the Motherhouse and Father Bruno Hagspiel, S.V.D., was preaching it. This Venerable priest was formerly the Provincial of his Order, a devout man and most interested in mystics. The nuns told him all about Rose. He read her life and came to the Villa to learn more about her. He admired the mystical phenomena of her life; but was much more interested in three favors which he wished to obtain through her. The wonderful cures and conversions obtained through her intercession increased his faith, and he no less believed in the many manifestations of the odor of rose, and of other heavenly aromas which scented her relics and the footsteps of her

friends. "I have all due respect for mystical manifestations," he would say, "and will not be hurt if I never witness them; but I do wish to obtain the spiritual favors I have in mind."

Meanwhile, Miss Kelly, a friend of Rose, who spares neither time nor money to make Rose known, was urged from within to send me her scented sand. She wanted to give me a proof that it was still abundantly fragrant, a proof which I did not need to believe, but a proof which apparently was needed for others. So she sent it along with Father Walter Read who was coming to Villa Pauline.

About 1 P.M., April 13, the pastor of Bel Air, Md., came in and gave it to me while Father Bruno was here visiting. As the box was sealed, I opened it in their presence with some misgivings about the odor and especially about the chances of each and all of us getting it. To my delight, the box was chuck full of fragrance. I passed it on to Father Read who scented it and nodded his approval and said: "It's all right!" I took the box and walked up to Father Bruno. "What's that?" said the Retreat Master. "Smell it and see," was the answer. He took the box, wrapper and all and scented the odor. He thought it was incense and extolled its delicate fragrance. On hearing it was the soil of Little Rose's grave, he exclaimed: "What! Little Rose's grave!" He sniffed it again and again and would stop, look at us and repeat with amazement: "Isn't this wonderful!"—Before this experience, took place, Father Bruno felt that he was called to make Rose known. After this experience, I had no doubt that Rose had brought him here for that purpose. She sent him the sand of her grave that he might witness its fragrance and testify before others of this rare gift of God. Be it as it may, a month later, on the 11th of May, the eighth anniversary of Rose's death, Father, with a companion of his, was on his way to visit Rose's grave. Father was pleased with his pilgrimage and Rose had found another promoter of her cause and had confirmed him.

Thoughts Above Thanet

IN THIS dashing decade of round-the-clock bombing, what soldier of the thousands that have roared back and forth over the English Channel has looked down at the coast of Kent, just below the mouth of the Thames, and called to mind the history of that little isle of Thanet? Or how many even know that this is the spot where St. Augustine and his band of monks first landed when they came with good news for a pagan nation? Since that day the sea has altered the coastline of Thanet and a mere brook separates it from the mainland.

Although Thanet is hardly ever mentioned by historians except in connection with the landing of St. Augustine and his first interview with King Ethelbert, the great saint of the isle is St. Mildred, who would sound pretty dull if we only knew that she was second abbess of some-convent-or-other. But as it is, manuscripts from here and there together with local traditions and the interesting story of her convent would give anyone hovering over Thanet, either in spirit or in a bomber, plenty to think about.

The matter of the convent began with a couple of murders perpetrated for political reasons. It seems that King Egbert had arranged for the death of two princes, stolen their throne, and buried them under it, thinking they would remain undiscovered there. But a beam from heaven literally put some light on the affair, and a reckoning was demanded. The sister of the princes refused jewels but asked for a tract of land where a convent might be built in which prayers would be offered for the young men's souls. She became first abbess of this house and changed her name from Ermenburga to Eva, whence she was later known as Domneva.

Of her three daughters Mildred seemed most promising, so she sent her to the abbey of Chelles, near Paris, to complete her education. There is a strange story about a young nobleman wanting to

marry her and causing her to be thrown into a furnace from which she escaped unharmed. At any rate, Mildred hid for some time in Flanders at a place called Millam (Mildred's hamlet) where devotion to her endures to this day.

As soon as she crossed over to Thanet all the nuns of the convent came to meet her and welcome her to a group of seventy that were to take vows. The gathering of people at this event filled the church and the hillside in front of it.

A short time later Mildred succeeded her mother in the office of abbess. So began her service of the community, which was to continue for thirty years. Those who wrote of her said little about her governing—simply that she was kind to her sisters and merciful to the needy and poor. She must have led chiefly by example, for she showed fervor in the Divine Office, in fasting and vigils, and in her own private prayers; these last were sometimes accompanied by miraculous lights, and once the Holy Spirit appeared over her in the form of a dove, then entered her heart. She was given the grace to suffer many physical infirmities until her death in 725.

Her popularity among the people of the island may be seen on a map of Thanet where you will find St. Mildred's Bay, St. Mildred's lynch, St. Mildred's Road, St. Mildred's Abbey, St. Mildred's Hotel; and the convent she governed assumed soon afterwards the name of St. Mildred's Minster. About the year 1031 some monks removed her remains to Canterbury in the night time, pursued unsuccessfully by angry citizens brandishing swords and clubs. One old story says that a janitor who had fallen asleep before St. Mildred's shrine received a sound slap from her with the reminder that this was an oratory, not a dormitory.

And so an obscure little place is made fertile with memories by a knowledge of its saint.



BROTHER MEINRAD HELPS

Please have two Masses said for the glorification of Brother Meinrad. Through his intercession I have been helped in the time of need.

D.B. (Okla.)

Once again Brother Meinrad has interceded for me and through his intercession my prayers have been answered on three separate occasions.

K.T. (Okla.)

I wish to report two favors from Brother Meinrad. My daughter was married by the priest, the man accepting the instruction in all sincerity.—After begging for my son's return at an old mission in California and asking Brother Meinrad's help, I was awakened with word that he was grounded from combat duty with over a hundred missions as pilot of a large bomber, was fine, and would return to me.

J. H. (Okla.)

Enclosed find offering for favor received. Our boy found good employment through the intercession of Brother Meinrad.

L.S. (Wis.)

I have received three wonderful favors from Brother Meinrad. One in particular was almost next to being a miracle.

Z.B. (Minn.)

Enclosed please find offering for one Holy Mass in thanksgiving to Brother Meinrad for favorable weather.

R. H. (Kentucky)

I promised an offering for favors which I feel I have obtained through Brother Meinrad's help. Please accept from a very grateful client this check for his glorification.

H. J. V. (Ind.)

Am enclosing an offering for a Mass for Brother Meinrad's glorification for many favors received through his intercession.

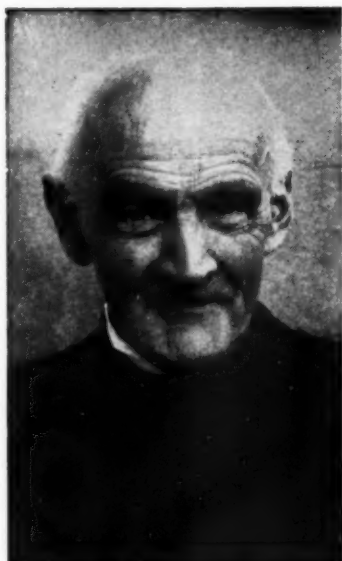
J.R. (Ind.)

The enclosed offering is in appreciation for help received through Brother Meinrad.

(Ind.)

Am enclosing offering for a Mass in thanksgiving to Brother Meinrad for favors granted to me, particularly the safe landing of my brother and step-father in France. I would also like you to know that with few exceptions all of my small favors asked of Brother Meinrad have been granted.

F. J. D. (Okla.)



The Servant of God, Brother Meinrad Eugster, O.S.B., was a member of Maria Einsiedeln Abbey in Switzerland. There he died in 1925 highly respected by his confreres for his virtuous life. His cause for beatification has been introduced at Rome, and THE GRAIL is the chosen organ for bringing his cause to the knowledge of American Catholics. A picture of Brother Meinrad and a prayer for his canonization may be procured by sending a stamped and self-addressed envelope to the Rev. Jerome Palmer, O.S.B., St. Meinrad, Indiana.

MONTHLY NOVENA

15th to 23rd

All who wish their petitions or intentions prayed for, please send them into THE GRAIL, St. Meinrad, Indiana before the 15th of the month. A Novena of Masses will be offered each month for the glorification and canonization of Brother Meinrad and for all the intentions sent in.

In order to make Brother Meinrad better known a booklet of stamps to be used on envelopes and packages can be obtained for ten cents from THE GRAIL, ST. MEINRAD, INDIANA.

Brother Meinrad answered my prayers by finding a lost ring which had been gone for over a week. Many and heartfelt thanks to him.

C. E. W. (Idaho)

This is to acknowledge several quite miraculous favors received through Brother Meinrad's intercession. They are safety for children, safety of niece in France, finding of books, and obtaining good position with Catholics.

H. R. H. (Ky.)

Thanks again to Brother Meinrad. Am enclosing a little offering for your good work.

E. B. (Okla.)

Enclosed find offering for a very special favor obtained. I promised publication of it.

L. T. B. (Ind.)

The offering enclosed is for a special favor I received through the intercession of Brother Meinrad.

S. A. E. (Ind.)

Please offer one Mass in thanksgiving to Brother Meinrad for finding a suitable residence. Also send me extra pamphlets with Brother Meinrad prayers.

D. H. B. (Texas)

I promised Brother Meinrad that if this special favor was granted I would have it published. Thanks to Brother Meinrad I got it in one week.

M. S. (Ind.)

Some time ago I suffered a nervous breakdown and I made a novena to Brother Meinrad, Our Lady of Lourdes, Little Therese, Saint Ann, Sacred Heart, and Precious Blood. I promised publication if I received a cure. I am well again.

L. J. B. (Pa.)

I promised to publish my favor received through the intercession of Little Rose Ferron.

M. L. (New York)

Please publish thanksgiving for favors received through the intercession of the Sacred Heart, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

M. M. C. (Texas)

I had a youngster ill for six weeks and prayed to Little Rose. My boy is home now, thank God, and well.

H.V. (N. Y.)

Through a prayer to Rose Ferron I was given a great favor, one which spared me much embarrassment and expense.

N.N. (Iowa)



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